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NEW TIMES

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THE WORLD MUST NOT BE PLUNGED INTO DARKNESS

Lenin in the Smolny, at a meeting of the Council of People's Commissars. Petrograd, 1918.

1917–1987

On November 1917 a wireless message was sent from Petrograd to Vatslav Vorovsky, a prominent Bolshevik then in Stockholm, asking him to undertake the duties of a plenipotentiary representative of revolutionary Russia in Sweden.

"Take steps," the radiogram said, "to inform the broadest sections of public opinion of the European continent, Britain and the United States of the nature and meaning of the revolution that has taken place in Russia."

What the revolution stood for was clear from its aims: peace to the peoples, the land to the peasants, workers' control over production, self-determination of the nations. The mechanism for the realization of these aims came into being after the formation of the workers' and peasants' government—the Council of People's Commissars. Above is the only surviving photograph of that first worker-peasant government.

The exact date of the picture is not known but judging by those who attended the meeting and the documents they adopted it is possible to establish that it must have been taken between January 1 and March 11, 1918, for later the composition of the government changed. There were not enough leading functionaries for all the posts that had to be filled. Experienced people were shifted from one sector of the state administration to another, depending on the needs of the moment.

The Council of People's Commissars at once became the headquarters of revolutionary reconstruction in the country. From November 1917 and up to the adoption of the Constitution of the world's first socialist state (in July 1918), the council examined hundreds, if not thousands of questions relating to the political, cultural and economic life of the republic, and its defence, thus translating the programme of the Bolshevik Party into the law of the land.

Millions of working people were drawn into the administration of state affairs. The People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, for instance, was set up with the participation of the workers of the Siemens-Schuckert Factory and the sailors of the Baltic Fleet. They were not versed in the subtleties of protocol but they fully understood that the task of the new Soviet ministry was to establish relations with all states on the basis of peaceful coexistence.

Vorovsky never received that wireless message. From the first days of its existence, revolutionary Russia found itself in complete diplomatic isolation. It was refused recognition, many countries simply declined to receive Soviet representatives.

It was in these circumstances that the foundations of Soviet policy were laid, a policy built on new principles of relations between states and peoples.

The first Soviet Constitution, 1918.

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OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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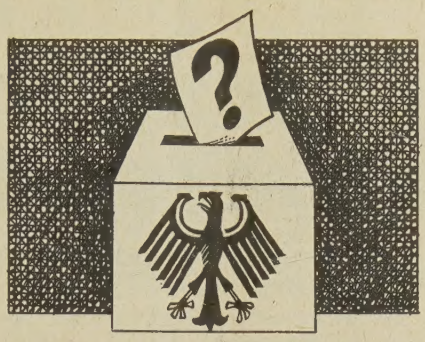

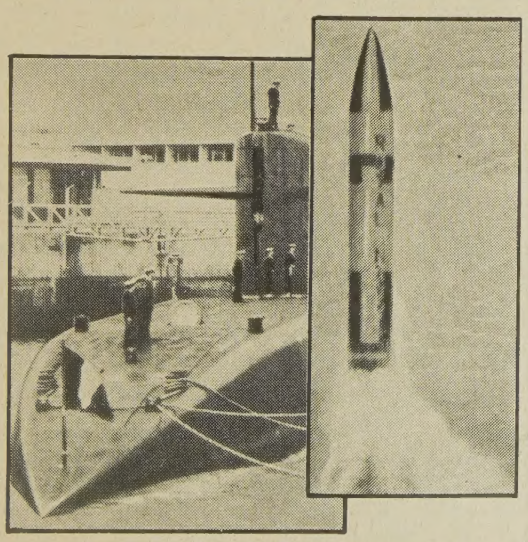

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

Speculating on the issue of human rights in the U.S.S.R. is one of capitalist propaganda's favourite—and most hackneyed—ploys. Instead of giving jobs, clothes, food and decent housing to the millions of its unemployed, homeless and undernourished, the West is deceiving them. All this human rights polemic is just so much eyewash, shamelessly resorted to by those on whom the solution of the vital human problems in the capitalist world depends. I am confident that in socialist countries people have more freedom and enjoy more rights than anywhere else.

Wolfgang KRÜGER
Delitzsch, G.D.R.

In my opinion, SDI isn't something that really exists. It is just a dream. And although research work is already under way, this dream has slim chances of coming true. SDI is a pretext for maintaining and augmenting U.S. nuclear arsenals.

Eddie HINES
Fargo, U.S.

The present American leaders' ostentatious conceit, arrogance and impudence have their origins in the past when the U.S. committed the crime of using atomic weapons against Japanese civilians and got away with it. But we all know from experience that if a crime is left unpunished, it will be repeated. It is just this impunity of the American leaders that has led them to new crimes in Vietnam, Grenada and Libya, to state terrorism with regard to Nicaragua and Angola, and the militarization of outer space.

Vincent ZAMISKA
Kosice, Czechoslovakia

THE EDITOR'S PAGE

TEST OF MATURITY

Nineteen eighty-six was the first year ever to be proclaimed an International Year of Peace by the world community. Though this was still symbolic, it caused millions the world over to ask themselves: what is meant by peace? Absence of war? Coexistence of opposites? Fair play and cooperation? Cherishing the experience and values of human civilization?

In search of the answers to these questions mankind is today taking a closer look at itself. States and politicians are undergoing a test of their maturity—each before all. And the highest demands are placed on the two powers which by virtue of their economic, military and political strength set the tone on our planet and hence bear the biggest share of the responsibility for its future.

The Soviet Union marked the Year of Peace by advancing unique initiatives. The qualitative leap forward in its political thinking prompted it to propose simple and at the same time comprehensive solutions to the problem of disarmament. Moscow submitted to the judgement of history a programme for ridding the world completely of nuclear weapons by the end of this century.

The logic of the new thinking helped to find the way out of most of the complex situations created by world development. Recall the repeated prolongation of the Soviet Union's unilateral moratorium on all nuclear testing, the latest extension being until the first nuclear explosion on U.S. proving grounds this year. Recall the proposals for the comprehensive far-reaching reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals, and for reliable verification. The Reykjavik package which further concretized the programme for the stage-by-stage elimination of nuclear weapons and provided for concessions to the American side for the sake of achieving the main objective. The efforts to ensure strict observance of the existing SALT and ABM treaties and agreements, as the basis for further advance. The search for new avenues to disarmament jointly with the other socialist, the non-aligned and the neutral countries. The signing at the Soviet-Indian summit of the Delhi declaration on the principles of a non-nuclear and non-violent world.

All this was enumerated in Mikhail Gorbachev's message to U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

Moscow thus demonstrated the maturity of its statesmanship in terms of practical action. Washington, on the other hand, confined itself to shopworn rhetoric about the supposed need for nuclear arms to safeguard security. Its response was built on the nuclear age antilogic of pursuing mirages—the drive for superiority. The antilogic which ignores the fact that to deliver the first strike at the adversary is to doom oneself to perish from the consequences of that strike—radiation that knows no frontiers and the "nuclear winter."

The United States is undermining existing agreements. It is putting into production ever more destabilizing weapon systems tested in Nevada. It is preparing to orbit anti-satellite systems and is hatching plans for expediting the realization of SDI, which prevented the agreements all but reached in the Icelandic capital from being finalized. Washington is now seeking to relegate Reykjavik to oblivion, that landmark which opened unbounded vistas for nuclear disarmament.

The Year of Peace has ended. But the crucial test of maturity of statesmanship continues.

IS A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD POSSIBLE?

AND WHAT IN YOUR OPINION ARE THE PREREQUISITES FOR INTERNATIONAL STABILITY?

Zdenek Dienstbier:
SHIELD OR SWORD OF DAMOCLES?

Dr Zdenek Dienstbier is director of the Czechoslovak Institute of Biophysics and Nuclear Medicine.

In stockpiling nuclear weapons, mankind is sitting on a powder keg. But I don't think this current cliché an accurate simile. It simplifies things: one mankind, and one keg. The real situation is more complex. The existing number of nuclear warheads can kill 20 times more people than there are on our planet today. The comparison with a powder keg is valid in that it conveys the risk of war breaking out by accident. We should not harbour any illusions: this could happen not only through a malfunctioning of the technical safeguards, but through a failure of human reason burdened with outdated ideas.

Experts have estimated that our world is on the brink of the accidental breakout of war once every two months. And this, given the clear awareness that a nuclear war, whether started by accident or design, will have no winners.

Can the nuclear weapon provide a shield against aggression and make man's future more secure? Alas, even "peaceful coexistence" between man and the nuclear weapon cannot be for long. The nuclear parity between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO has so far deterred imperialist quarters from military adventures. But the process of stockpiling nuclear weapons is already killing people. The arms race cuts aid to the hungry and sick in developing countries. Tens of thousands of children there die of curable infantile diseases because of the shortage of doctors and vaccines. The arms race, which is inevitable in "peace through strength" politics, slows down and kills social programmes in developed countries. We see that the policy of stockpiling nuclear weapons pursued by the capitalist countries costs mankind millions of deaths and tens of millions of cases of human suffering every year.

The only reason for the failure to reach agreement in Reykjavik is the "star wars" programme advocated by the U.S. President. In doing so, he probably understands that it is an illusory military programme—extremely costly and technically complex, the sole benefit being huge profits for the war industry in the U.S. and certain other capitalist countries. I personally fear the great military risk the programme involves. It is as much offensive as defensive, capable of causing the instant death of our planet as a result of quick decisions over which reason has no control.

What the world needs is not nuclear weapons or force. Mankind urgently needs to adopt a new mode of thinking in searching for a path to mutual understanding between countries with different political and social systems. We need universal disarmament and universal peace. This alone offers a real chance of survival. ■

Karl-Heinz Hansen:
NO GOING BACK FROM REYKJAVIK

A former West German MP, Karl-Heinz Hansen is an official spokesman for the Peace List, the biggest anti-war organization in the F.R.G.

The world must be free of nuclear weapons by the turn of the century. Otherwise, it will have no future. The danger that a third world war, even if it breaks out against our will, would destroy all life on Earth makes it necessary to think and act in a new way.

A world without nuclear weapons, a world without wars is not a utopia. Such a world has become realistic and attainable, for the political leaders of our time are aware of the need not only to think but also to act in a new way. Signs of hope in the changing international political climate are the decisions of the U.N., of 101 non-aligned states, the six heads of state and government of four continents who signed the Delhi declaration and, above all, the peace proposals made by Mikhail Gorbachev.

The programme of disarmament up to 2000, the repeated extensions of the unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing, the far-reaching proposals for concrete steps on disarmament put forward in Reykjavik, and the initiatives on cuts

in conventional and chemical weapons—all this is vivid proof that the Soviet Union has not left disarmament, as the chief prerequisite for world peace, in the hands of "experts," but is energetically and consistently searching for a political solution.

This offensive peace policy can only be successful if the other side cooperates and expresses the same commitment to peace and détente. To date, this has not been the case: the U.S. continues to carry out nuclear tests under flimsy pretexts, has broken the SALT-2 treaty and is clinging to its "star wars" programme despite the fact that it runs counter to the ABM treaty. Unfortunately, the F.R.G. government is an active partner in this policy, which runs counter to the spirit of peace.

The conviction is growing, not only among peace activists but also among those who do not take part in actions and demonstrations for peace and détente, that the policy of isolation, confrontation and deterrence pursued by the West at the U.S. dictation, has no future. The experience of 1986, which demonstrated that concrete steps towards détente are possible, will in time occupy a central place in international politics, the politics of the future.

The alternative demonstrated in Reykjavik will be the basis for a change in relations between states with different social and political systems if the Soviet Union exhibits patience and restraint and continues its new policy, which is fully concordant with the aspirations of the world's peoples. The strategists of the first strike theory are on the defensive. There is no going back from Reykjavik.

Stability in international relations is only possible on the basis of the equality of all states and peoples. It will come about when confrontation is replaced by peaceful cooperation between the two systems, when rivalry gives way to cooperation and competition in the economic, scientific, technological and cultural fields for the good of all those who live and work on our planet. It is a goal worth striving for. ■

Marcio Santilli:
CIVILIZATION IS SO FRAGILE

Marcio Santilli is a member of the foreign relations committee of the Brazilian Chamber of Deputies.

We share the deep concern of the Soviet people about the destinies of all peoples in the face of the danger of nuclear catastrophe indicated by the General Secretary of the CC CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev in his historic statement of January 15, 1986. A thermonuclear war, if it breaks out, would destroy human civilization and all life. It is therefore necessary to work vigorously together to create a nuclear-free world with a reliable system of international security as advocated by the Soviet Union. This should be done through constructive negotiations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. on nuclear disarmament. The Soviet Union, at the Reykjavik summit, made far-reaching proposals providing a sound basis for a successful and early conclusion of the negotiations.

However, the stubborn commitment of the U.S. Administration to its Strategic Defence Initiative gives cause for grave concern. Plainly, one cannot talk of nuclear disarmament while the U.S. is trying to open a new front in the strategic arms race by deploying space strike systems.

A year has passed since Mikhail Gorbachev put forward the programme for eliminating nuclear weapons before the year 2000. It has been a difficult year, marked as it was by such tragedies as the explosion of the American spacecraft Challenger and the accident at the Soviet nuclear power plant. These events highlighted the fragility of peace and the fate of human civilization in the nuclear-space age. On the other hand, the past year has seen the Soviet moratorium on nuclear explosions. But it was also the year when the U.S. deliberately violated the SALT-2 treaty and continued its sinister nuclear explosions in the Nevada Desert.

But our view of world events need not be unduly pessimistic. I believe the Soviet efforts are evoking a response and support in the hearts and minds of people everywhere. The new political thinking is winning supporters in various public strata in various regions, including those far from the world centres of power such as South America.

In this country, as in the whole of Latin America, we see a growing body of public opinion opposed to the nuclear arms race. Cities and municipalities are proclaiming themselves nuclear-free zones. People realize that the nuclear weapon and other types of weapon of mass destruction are profoundly amoral, that they run counter to the essence of human existence and should therefore be outlawed internationally.

We see Brazil's proposal to turn the South Atlantic into a zone of peace and cooperation free of nuclear weapons and its approval by the United Nations as a shining example of new political thinking. It is clear that the establishment of nuclear-free zones on our planet could be one of the most significant steps towards establishing a nuclear-free world. ■

IS A NUCLEAR-FREE WORLD POSSIBLE?

André De Smet:
BLIND ALLEY OF "DETERRENCE"

André De Smet is editor-in-chief of the Belgian monthly Vrede (Peace).

On the day of the first ever nuclear attack—the atomic bombardment of Hiroshima in 1945—it became clear that mankind had acquired a weapon of unheard-of destructive power.

Since then sufficient nuclear weapons have been stockpiled to destroy our planet many times over. Prominent scientists are of the opinion that even a limited use of these weapons would imperil the future of mankind. And although Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan stressed at the Geneva summit that there is no winning a nuclear war, certain politicians (in the Western Hemisphere, for the most part) believe that their salvation lies exclusively in building up nuclear arms. They still cling to the so-called "policy of deterrence" and will not admit that it leads to an impasse.

Man cannot always live with this

sword of Damocles hanging over him. The Challenger tragedy in the United States, the Chernobyl disaster in the Soviet Union, the Bhopal accident in India and many other such cases show that the technical facilities wielded by man are far from irreproachable. The likelihood of a nuclear accident cannot therefore be ruled out, either.

The plan to deliver mankind from nuclear weapons before the year 2000, put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev, has given all nations new hope. This plan and the proposals advanced by the Warsaw Treaty in Budapest for a systematic reduction of conventional weapons offer two concrete ways of achieving disarmament.

Unfortunately, the stand taken by President Reagan in Reykjavik dashed our hopes again. Although an understanding had been reached in principle on the elimination of medium-range missiles in Europe (with only 100 missiles left in the Asian part of the U.S.S.R. and 100 in North America), and of strategic missiles within a decade, President Reagan, clinging to his cherished "star wars" project, denied mankind the possibility of using this signal achievement, which would have brought disarmament and peace closer.

The refusal to give a positive response to the unilateral moratorium announced by the U.S.S.R. on August 6, 1985 (the U.S. has carried out 24 nuclear tests since then) is further evidence of Reagan lacking the political will to stop the arms race.

It is also to be regretted that West European political leaders, who could have played a crucial role as interested parties, have shown no desire to take a different course.

Since our government's approval of the NATO "double-track decision" of December 12, 1979 on the deployment of cruise missiles in Belgium, public opinion has been resisting the nuclear threat to an ever greater extent.

Mikhail Gorbachev's proposal that the world should be made nuclear-free towards the year 2000 has been welcomed in Belgium.

It has become clear since Reykjavik that the public and the peace forces must redouble their efforts in opposing nuclear arms and do their utmost to achieve concrete results.

The year 1987 must also be the year of an international campaign to end all nuclear tests. It is necessary to spare no efforts to convince the U.S. Congress of the need to stop nuclear testing. This is a realistic objective, and attaining it would pave the way for other disarmament agreements.

The establishment of non-nuclear zones in Europe—an idea which attracts ever greater interest—could be another important step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons in our continent.

Man is now facing the choice of either destroying nuclear weapons within the next decade, or plunging into a catastrophe. ■

"The Earth Is for Life Only." A poster by Y. Nikolayev in the international For Peace and Social Progress contest.

Vladimir Orel:
WANTED: TRUST

Vladimir Orel is first deputy chairman of the Soviet Peace Committee.

Whether the world is or is not to be nuclear-free is no longer the question for the anti-war movement. Whereas politicians are still undecided, the world public has long taken a definite stand on the matter. It is enough to recall the well-known Einstein-Russell manifesto in which a group of prominent scientists from various countries declared for new thinking over thirty years ago. The mass peace movement of today is uncompromisingly anti-nuclear.

The idea of a non-nuclear world which "sober-minded" politicians have long pronounced unrealistic is now winning support at government level as well—a most encouraging sign. The reason Reykjavik is so dear to the anti-war public is that the elimination of nuclear weapons was transmuted from a good intention into practical understandings. Since Reykjavik it has become clear that a non-nuclear world is not only desirable but feasible as well. This gives rise to optimism.

At the same time, there arises another problem which has to do with the second part of your question. Today international politics cannot be pursued along classical, traditional lines without taking a new factor of present-day reality—world public opinion—into consideration. I do not mean just lip-deep curtseys to the peace-loving public. Professional politicians ought to regard this public as a serious partner in generating new ideas and selecting new approaches to problems of international security. Much of what is now the subject matter of practical discussion at government level and of what is being formalized in official documents, international agreements and treaties included, has been born and formulated at the public level.

International stability can be truly lasting on condition that it rests not only on international law and international agreements, but also on trust and friendly relations between nations, between ordinary individuals. Détente at the highest level should be accompanied by détente at grassroots, by the elimination of mutual suspicion and hostility.

What we have to date has been a monstrous isolation of people in most Western countries from the Soviet Union with regard to information. Instead of objective and truthful information, Western media audiences are offered a stereotype, often picturing our country as a mystic enemy. Isn't this a violation of the human right to independent thinking?

I am far from claiming that we are immune to certain stereotypes ourselves. But I have every reason to say that the Soviet people are not infected with hostile feelings toward other nations. The "free world" would be well-advised to think about this. We realize that making our common world stable calls for trust. ■

Poll conducted by Y. BESPALKO, V. BOIKOV, B. KOZLOV, A. TOLPEGIN

Ten years ago Moscow and Helsinki adopted a long-term programme of expanding trade and industrial, scientific and technological cooperation, pioneering long-term East-West programmes of the kind. Today they are setting an example in promoting new forms of business ties.

During the recent visit to Finland by Soviet Premier Nikolai Ryzhkov, agreements were signed on establishing joint enterprises—the first such agreements between the U.S.S.R. and a West European country. And this is only a beginning.

Plus 20 Joint Enterprises

"Every new undertaking, especially one like joint ventures, calls for mutual confidence," Nikolai Ryzhkov told me. "Recently, opening the New Tallinn port, we suggested to our Finnish colleagues that we try pioneering in this form of cooperation. Other Western countries also have plenty to offer in the way of modern technology and equipment. But it was our relations with Finland and the level of confidence in each other that prompted us to make this offer. Even if something goes slightly wrong at first—after all, no one is insured against minor miscalculations—we know for certain that our Finnish partners and ourselves have the firm political will to solve any problems that could arise."

Jermu Laine, Finland's Minister of Foreign Trade, told me of his country's eagerness to find mutually acceptable answers to any complex questions in the context of Soviet-Finnish economic cooperation.

"Over the past decade our relations have been enriched with new forms of cooperation. Our trade has become more varied, and high-technology elements have appeared in it. Today the Soviet Union accounts for a fifth of our total foreign trade, we are now doing more business with it. Admittedly, however, this was caused by a rise in the price of oil which constitutes the lion's share of our import from the U.S.S.R. So far, machines and equipment do not figure very prominently. But we see that the Soviet Union is seeking to vary its exports. We are also interested in this. Naturally, the process will take time.

"The structure of our export has changed over the decades. The share of logs and timber in it amounts to roughly 40 per cent. Metalworking industry products now make up 36 per cent of our exports as against a mere 5 per cent in the early postwar years. As for our export to the Soviet Union, these products amount to over half the total.

"Frankly, it was our trade with the Soviet Union that compelled us to pay serious attention to the development of know-how in the metalworking industry. Thanks to Soviet orders we have attained the highest world standards in ship- and icebreaker-building, for instance. The same probably applies to consumer goods."

"What new forms of cooperation could you identify today?"

"Joint production, above all. Trade in commodities is already a past stage, in fact. The emphasis now is on carrying out joint projects, on the promotion of industrial co-production. We have achieved certain successes in this field. For example, our two countries have jointly built two atomic power plants in Lovisa...."

"Doesn't it seem to you that such plants have lost some of their popularity?"

"Not at all. We are well enough prepared technologically to build reliable atomic power plants. These sources of energy are extremely important to us. We observe all the operation safety and environment protection requirements.

"Naturally, we are looking for new forms of cooperation to be added to those that have already proved their worth. For instance, a special attachment for producing lead-free petrol has been invented. Our Neste state-run factory has the equipment to make this fuel. I know that the Soviet Union also has such equipment. Therefore, I don't see any obstacles in the way of the joint production of such petrol. Demand for it continues to grow, and we should hurry lest anyone steal a march on us.

"We can also make, through joint effort, flexible automatic control systems which are coming to play an increasingly important role in mechanical engineering today."

The minister admitted there was an imbalance in trade between our two, countries. The U.S.S.R. supplied a great deal of oil to Finland, getting products necessary for its national economy in return. However, the plummeting of world oil prices in the first half of 1986 has resulted in a serious imbalance in Finland's favour.

What can be done about it? Slash Finnish export to the U.S.S.R.? This would be extremely unprofitable for Finland, as well as for the Soviet Union.

"We consider the agreement on increasing commodity turnover by 10 per cent as compared with the last year's figure the main outcome of Nikolai Ryzhkov's visit," Jermu Laine told me in conclusion. "Furthermore, we have agreed to take up 20 out of about 50 ideas for joint ventures suggested...."

Finland pins great hopes on the current new developments in the Soviet economy and foreign trade. The first joint construction project is being undertaken. Finnair, one of Finland's biggest concerns, it to build a hotel in Moscow jointly with its Soviet partner—the Intourist Joint-Stock Company.

"Please accept my congratulations," I told Gunnar Korhonen, Director-General of Finnair, "although it is always hard to blaze a new trail. Could you say a few words about the agreement signed?"

"This is a very interesting and, I hope, promising joint venture," Gunnar Korhonen replied. "I am very pleased with the agreement itself and the frank and businesslike way in which the negotiations were conducted. Our interest in the venture is 49 per cent to Intourist's 51. The agreement provides against even the slightest complications, so all is set for an early start."

"What's the term of the project?"

"We know from practical experience that such construction projects usually take about eighteen months."

"Do you plan to deal with any other partners in the U.S.S.R.?"

"Not so far. Let's get off to a good start first, and then we'll see."

D. POGORZHELSKY
our special correspondent
Helsinki

Washington's "Peace-Keepers"

A U.S. Federal Aviation Administration radar station located an enormous unidentified flying object late last year. The UFO followed a Boeing-747 transport plane for 32 minutes. The Boeing pilot reported that his huge aircraft was dwarfed by it.

Though of doubtful authenticity, this Washington Post report attracted my attention. Was it a New Year's Eve joke? Whatever it was, let us give rein to our imaginations for a moment. What would have caught an extraterrestrial visitor's eye had he flown over Nevada, for instance? What would he have thought of the U.S. government's intentions had he walked into the Capitol building at the moment when books containing the draft of the new federal budget (author: Ronald Reagan) were selling briskly at $11 apiece? The draft allocates $312 billion to the Pentagon in the fiscal year 1988, which means a 23-billion-dollar increase in military spending. I wonder what the guest from the UFO would have made of the expression "peace-keeper" so popular in the White House. Here is a far from complete list of the "peace-keepers" in question.

"Peace-keeper" No. 1. Nuclear tests.

A bird's-eye view of the Nevada Desert clearly shows underground nuclear test craters, the number of which has increased considerably since the suspension of Soviet tests a year and a half ago. The other day I telephoned Edith Villastrigo of Women Strike for Peace, a Washington organization long opposed to nuclear testing. Edith wasn't in at the time but I learned, nevertheless, that Washington was considering carrying out its next explosion, scheduled for January 29, twelve days earlier. Its motive was to provoke the U.S.S.R. into taking countermeasures as soon as possible and thus to relieve the U.S. government of political pressure. Nuclear-pumped lasers—the components of the future space strike weapons—are tested regularly.

"Peace-keeper" No. 2. The MX missile.

Incidentally, the President called it exactly that: "a peace-keeper." Ten of them have already been deployed at the U.S. Air Force base in Warren (Wyoming). By 1988 special silos will be ready for them in two more states—Nebraska and Colorado. The new draft budget provides for funding the construction of another 50 MX missiles. The other day General John Chain, head of the Strategic Air Command, announced the most important decision on strategic missiles ever adopted by the current Administration: a plan for the mobile flatcar deployment of MX missiles, aimed at increasing their survivability. The Midgetman "small" strategic missile is already on the drawing boards.

"Peace-keeper" No. 3. The B-52 bomber carrying cruise missiles.

The 132nd modified B-52 bomber arrived at an air base in Michigan to blow another hole in SALT-2.

"Peace-keeper" No. 4. The Trident submarine.

The latest sub in the series, the Tennessee, has just been launched.

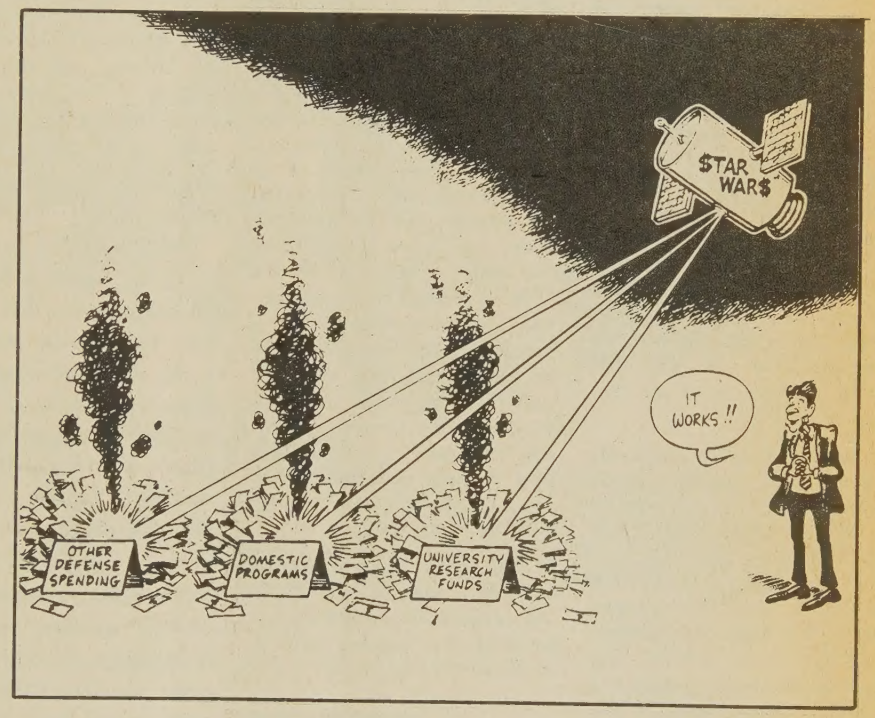
"Peace-keeper" No. 5. A special one. The Strategic Defence Initiative.

Judging by the new draft budget, the Pentagon wants $5.2 billion for it, or 62 per cent increase on the figure for the current fiscal year. "With respect to strategic defence, it remains one of our highest priorities," Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger explained to newsmen, "and it is important that we move along as rapidly as we can to secure the benefits that deployment of that system will bring."

The U.S. Defence Secretary must be complimented on his straightforwardness. This statement would make it perfectly clear even to a visitor from another planet, innocent of Washington's demagogy, that the White House cannot wait to carry out its "star wars" plans and thus secure military supremacy. This is what it needs Peace-keeper No. 1 for.

I feel that where "other defence spending" is concerned the American cartoon reproduced here is a bit wide of the mark. It follows from the above that Washington does not even dream of giving up nuclear weapons or replacing its tested strategic triad with the SDI. It intends to retain all the "peace-keepers"—or rather, instruments of war—listed here.

Galina SIDOROVA



Cartoon from People's Daily World (U.S.A.)

KOREAN PENINSULA

The North Proposes Talks

● THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA IS PROPOSING TOP-LEVEL MILITARY AND POLITICAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH.

The proposed subject of negotiations is urgent measures to put an end to the current political confrontation and defuse tensions in the peninsula. A letter from Li Gun Mo, Premier of the Administration Council of the D.P.R.K., and O Jin U, Minister of People's Armed Forces, addressed to the Prime Minister and National Defence Minister of South Korea names the possible venue and date of the first round as Panmunjon on January 27.

The new D.P.R.K. initiatives aimed at the peaceful reunification of Korea and turning it into a nuclear-free zone are part of Pyongyang's action programme put forward by Kim Il Sung in a speech before the Supreme People's Assembly of the D.P.R.K. The situation in the peninsula has seriously deteriorated in the past few months, which have seen a buildup of American troops in the South and Seoul's vicious new attacks on the D.P.R.K. By bringing new missiles to South Korea Washington seeks to deprive the Korean people of the prospect of reunification. The forced partition of Korea continues to be a source of suffering for a divided nation and threatens grave complications for the whole region.

Pyongyang proposes to end mutual recriminations, cut the armed forces, stop the buildup of armaments, renounce large-scale military exercises, and turn the demilitarized zone into a zone of peace which would create the atmosphere of confidence necessary for the suspended dialogue to be resumed.

This is not the first D.P.R.K. proposal to Seoul, which is trying to evade a direct and honest dialogue. But the situation in the region is changing. The ideas contained in Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech last year gave an impulse to a new search for ways of normalizing the situation in the Far East. The socialist countries of Asia are actively involved in this process. Addressing the Supreme People's Assembly, Kim Il Sung stressed the positive impact of growing cooperation between the socialist countries. The states of Indo-China seek to normalize the situation over Kampuchea. Mongolia has proposed an all-Asia forum of public forces for peace and cooperation. There has been support for the idea, discussed at the 19th Congress of Mongolian Communists, of a consultative meeting open to all Communist and Workers' parties in the region in order to contribute towards political dialogue and cooperation in Asia and the Pacific. The meeting is due to be held next summer.

The efforts of the fraternal socialist countries are creating favourable conditions for tackling the region's priority problems.

Leonid MLECHIN

U.S.A.—EEC

Tit for Tat

● THE SPECTRE OF PROTECTIONISM IS AGAIN LOOMING OVER TRANSATLANTIC TRADE.

This was how the West German newspaper Kölner Stadtanzeiger described Washington's intention to double customs duties on West European cheeses, ham, brandy and other hard liquors by the end of January. As a result of these measures, the EEC will lose $400 million in its foreign trade. But it is not only the money but the principle involved that matters. All the more so as it is not only over the Common Market that Washington is cracking the whip.

The U.S. Adminstration has recently imposed new restrictions on gas imports from Canada. As from July 1987 Washington will introduce new import tariffs on some goods from Mexico, Brazil, Singapore and other developing countries, which would cut the U.S. trade deficit by $2 billion. Yet even this is a drop in the ocean of the American foreign trade deficit, which stood at more than $170 billion at the end of last year.

Jim Wright, the new speaker of the House of Representatives, believes that the only way to eliminate the deficit is to make American goods more competitive. This will be the "dominant economic issue" until the end of the century. Judging by this deadline, greater competitiveness is pie in the sky, while protectionism is an immediate weapon, whose use is favoured by both Republicans and Democrats in Congress, a rare case of unanimity.

Congress's tough line on trade with the EEC was indicated by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz during his recent talks with the British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe. The London Daily Mail has recently reported that the Common Market governments have been receiving signals of a new wave of protectionist measures by the U.S. So the protectionist measures announced on the eve of 1987 are seen by the United States' competitors as the opening shots in a long round of trade battles.

The recent experience of "steel," "macaroni" and "citrus" wars has made the Common Market ready to respond to Washington's move with tit for tat measures. Unless Washington reverses its position, said Willy de Clercq, member of the Commission of the European Communities, the EEC "will be ready to respond the same day the American measures come into force." The CEC will limit the import of American fodders, wheat and rice to the tune of $400 million.

In the past Canada and other U.S. economic partners have also met sanctions on a tit for tat basis. This suggests that the transatlantic and other trade quarrels could develop into a large-scale protectionist war. In the face of a looming cyclic depression in the world capitalist economy, such a war spells dire consequences not only for the feuding parties, but for international trade as a whole.

Felix GORYUNOV

IRAN—IRAQ

Not a "Forgotten War"

● THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT'S STATEMENT OF JANUARY 8 IS AN URGENT PLEA FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE IRAN-IRAQ CONFLICT.

A solution to the disputed issues between Iraq and Iran should be sought not in the battlefield but at the negotiating table—this is the keynote of this important foreign policy document.

"Both countries—and this is the behest of the time—must proceed from the assumption that every people has the right to independence and freedom, the right to choose its own way of life and determine its destiny," reads the statement.

There exist two approaches to the Iran-Iraq war. The West has until recently called it a "forgotten war." But is it?

Here are a few revealing statements quoted by Time magazine last summer. "I hope the war will continue for another 30 years," said an Israeli official. This from former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger: "The only regrettable aspect of this situation is that only one of the parties can lose." These informal pronouncements express what Washington and Tel Aviv are trying to achieve in practice. So, the war in the Middle East has not been forgotten by the U.S. and its allies. The secret arms shipments to Iran by Israel and the United States show that Zionist-imperialist circles are not only keeping a close watch over developments on the 730-mile Iran-Iraq front, but are actively pouring oil on the flames.

All this is in striking contrast with the Soviet stand. Leaving aside the political and other differences that provided the cause and pretext for the war, the Soviet government proceeds from humanitarian concerns and the wish to see peace restored in the region. As it says in its statement, "anti-humane acts are being resorted to in the course of the war, such as the use of chemical weapons, and strikes on civilian targets and population centres which contain no military targets. Under threat is the security of international waterways in the Persian Gulf, where merchant vessels and tankers are being attacked, including those belonging to states not involved in the conflict."

It is hard, perhaps impossible, to measure the degree of suffering that has befallen the two peoples. A rough idea can be gained from the data cited by Nader Rafia Nemad, a member of the Iranian opposition, at the end of last year. He said that the war has cost Iran a million lives, three million refugees, and hundreds of billions of dollars in economic damage. These figures should be roughly comparable with the losses of the Iraqi people in the course of the war lasting for more than six years.

Well done! Your doves look like real ones.

Drawing by V. Arsenyev

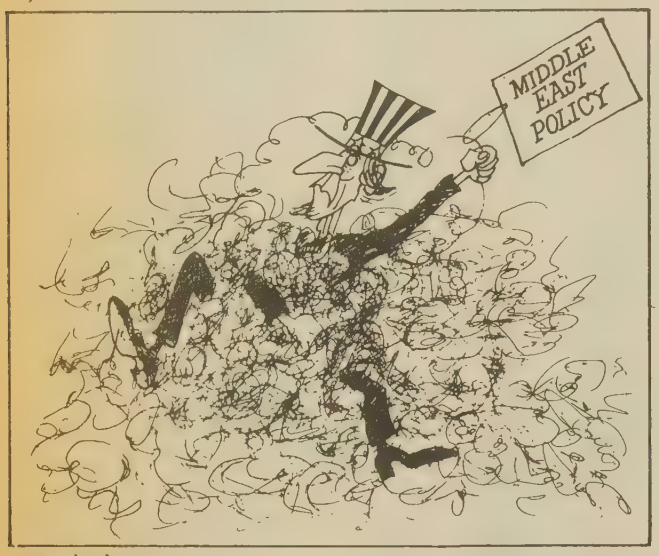
Another difference between the Western and Soviet approaches to the Iran-Iraq conflict is that while the Soviet Union is refraining from any military presence near the region, the United States constantly maintains its Seventh Fleet at the approaches to the Persian Gulf and is persisting in its attempts to establish a military presence at the very epicentre of the war—in the Persian Gulf. The Soviet government's statement notes with alarm: "Under the false pretext of protecting their 'vital interests,' powers, situated thousands of kilometres from the region, are sending battleships and forming special military commands, holding exercises of rapid deployment forces, bringing

pressure to bear on the countries in the area and threatening their security."

The international situation today being what it is, even small wars can develop into major international conflicts. The Iran-Iraq war is seen by some experts as perhaps the bloodiest conflict since World War II. It is this that makes the Soviet statement so timely. It warns against allowing the Iran-Iraq military confrontation to escalate.

The Soviet government for its part is ready to contribute in every way it can to any honest efforts, including those within the framework of the U.N., to initiate a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

Dmitry ZGERSKY



Enmeshed...
Cartoon from Frankfurter Rundschau (F.R.G.)

CHAD

Behind That Tour

● U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE GEORGE SHULTZ HAS RECENTLY MADE A TOUR OF TROPICAL AFRICA WHICH TOOK HIM TO SENEGAL, CAMEROON, KENYA, CÔTE D'IVOIRE, NIGERIA AND LIBERIA.

Why did he choose these countries?

The State Department has explained that all of them have "relatively close ties with the West" and maintain "friendly relations" with the U.S. A further attraction of these countries for Washington is that they are to varying degrees committed to the "market economy," i.e., are following the capitalist path of development.

In his public statements in Dakar and other capitals he visited Shultz extolled the virtues of the "market economy" as a cure for all the economic ills that have plagued Africa over the past decade. While reminding his audiences of U.S. aid, the Secretary of State, an economist by training, chose not to mention the colossal profits the transnational corporations are pumping out of the continent precisely because the "market economy" sets no limits to their selfish activities.

However, George Shultz did not cross the ocean to make propaganda speeches.

His motive was different. Shultz visited Africa at a time when developments in Chad had taken a dangerous turn. The fighting is already taking place in the north, close to the Libyan border, and France, urged on by the United States, is increasingly involved. The escalation of interference is accompanied by stepped-up slanderous propaganda about a "Libyan threat." According to the State Department, Shultz's talks with African leaders were to give considerable

AFGHANISTAN

TOWARDS NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

Habib Mangal, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan in the U.S.S.R., describes the first steps towards national reconciliation in an interview with our correspondent Leonid Mironov.

On January 15, the D.R.A. will unilaterally cease fire and suspend combat action. What part is this move expected to play in achieving peace in your country?

Asked what he wants more than anything else, any Afghan will give you one reply: "May peace be established throughout Afghanistan." It is for the sake of attaining this noble objective that the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the Revolutionary Council and the government have issued a historic call for national reconciliation.

Of course, a ceasefire is not yet peace, but only the first step towards it. A lasting peace presupposes a nationwide accord on how to organize the fair and representative management of our common home—Afghanistan. We are prepared to offer everyone an equal chance to speak up on the problems relating to the future political and socio-economic development of the country.

"We do not want," Comrade Najib told the December plenary meeting of the PDPA Central Committee, "to exclude various political groupings of centrist and monarchistic affiliations and leaders of the armed anti-government groupings operating abroad from the national reconciliation process." In other words, the people's power is prepared to form a government of national unity, even a coalition, with other political parties, groups and political factions taking part.

Our purpose is to give and guarantee Afghanistan the status of a sovereign, non-aligned and independent state. This accords with the wishes of all Afghans, including those of our countrymen who have found themselves abroad. It should be stressed that as a sovereign, non-aligned and neutral state Afghanistan will not stop its advance towards justice and a better life. Our homeland must become prosperous and our people happy. At present there are real ways of achieving a prompt and cardinal settlement in Afghanistan which would expedite the return home of the limited contingent of Soviet troops now in the D.R.A. at our country's request.

Following Kabul's call for reconciliation, almost a thousand members of the former counterrevolutionary formation operating in Herat Province have stopped fighting. What was the reaction of other armed groupings to the call?

The people's authorities are now conducting negotiations with 417 bands, 37,000

attention to alleged "Libyan subversion," supposedly causing concern in many African countries. The statement did not mention which countries. And no wonder, because many African countries, such as Nigeria, are concerned not about the imagined "Libyan threat" but about the massive U.S. arms supplies to N'Djamena. These supplies are far in excess of the needs of its tiny army. Most probably, the weapons are being sent with an eye to a perspective which is an open secret. In pushing France into confrontation with Libya, the U.S. is waiting in the wings to come to the aid of its NATO ally. But how do the African countries "friendly to the U.S." view this perspective? Will they approve direct U.S. interference in the Chad conflict? Perhaps this was what Shultz was trying to induce his African counterparts to do by producing the bogey of the "Libyan threat"?

Yuri BOCHKARYOV

POLAND

"How Much Can You Give?"

● THIS IS THE APPEAL THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND HAS LAUNCHED TO BELIEVERS. THE WEEKLY POLITYKA ASSESSES THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF THE CHURCH IN POLAND.

If the building of new churches is taken as a general indicator, writes Polityka, an interesting comparison suggests itself. Between 1919 and 1939 about 60 churches were built in Poland every year. Between 1965 and 1985, 1,856 churches were built, an average of 93 a year. This suggests that the funds of the Catholic church in Poland have doubled compared with those before the war. These figures, however, do not tell the whole story, for the old prewar church buildings cannot be compared with the modern ones as regards technical fittings and interior decoration. Polityka cites average incomes for the clergy. In 1986, in a parish of about 4,500 believers (about 1,500 families) every parishioner paid 440 zloty to the priest for religious and administrative services. Thus, an average priest in Poland has a monthly income of 165,000 zloty, which works out at 1,981,500 zloty a year. In smaller parishes, priests' "salaries" are less. But on the other hand, some communities number 10,000 believers and more, and the priests there make several million zloty a year. To this one should add that priests live in church-owned premises for which they do not pay, and they are exempt from income tax. According to official figures, a priest in an average parish community of 4,500 people pays an annual tax of 10,200 zloty. The taxes in prewar Poland were 20 times higher. The priests keep all the proceeds for themselves.

On the incomes of parish churches, Polityka points out that each parishioner annually donates 440 zloty to the church, the same amount he pays to the priest. Thus, the annual income of parish churches is 15.4 billion zloty, of cathedrals, 10.8 billion, and of the episcopate, 4.6 billion. This amounts to 30.8 billion zloty. The church invests eight per cent (2.5 billion) of this sum. This is not too great a sum when measured against the scale of new church building. So extra donations are exacted from believers. The amounts and total are unknown. ■

rong in all. Besides the erat band, large armed forations have come over to e republic's side in Jawan, Nangarhar, and other ovinces. Those who have opped combat action against e revolutionary power are eing given a chance to rern to their native parts and erform religious rites in any art of the country.

The other day, Haji Muammad Zamqani, acting esident of the Presidium of e Revolutionary Council, et with the chiefs and eld- s of the Pushtun tribes Wa- r and Masud. What agreeents have been reached ith these and other tribes ways and means of hieving national reconcilaon?

The frontier Pushtun tribes oleheartedly supported e policy of national reconciliation because it meets their cherished aspirations. Peace Jirgahs are being convened, and extraordinary reconciliation commissions formed in the provinces of Paktia, Paktika, Nangarhar, Kunar and Kandahar. The Council of Ministers and the local authorities have undertaken to step up material and other aid to the tribes. Various agricultural facilities, light industry factories, schools and hospitals are to be built in those provinces in order to promote the development of the tribal areas. Notably, the tribes living on the other side of the Durand Line also voice their support for the policy of national reconciliation. The Afridi, Shinwari, Mohmand and Zazi tribes expressed their solidarity with this policy.

And what is the attitude to this policy on the part of Washington and Islamabad?

Washington and Islamabad are trying to sow doubts as to the sincerity of our proposals. The fact that thousands of our compatriots are dying, that our country is becoming a bleeding wound leaves them utterly unmoved. We are patient, however, and are prepared to enter into negotiations even with them. But let them not regard this preparedness as weakness. The policy of national reconciliation is evidence of our strength.

Eduard Shevardnadze, member of the Political Bureau of the CPSU Central Committee, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., and Anatoly Dobrynin, Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, have visited Kabul recently. What contribution has the visit made to the further development of Soviet-Afghan relations?

We regard the visit paid by comrades Eduard Shevardnadze and Anatoly Dobrynin to Kabul as a historic event. It took place at a crucial moment of our history. The U.S.S.R. has given full support to the policy of national reconciliation worked out by our leadership.

At the Kabul negotiations, the two sides mapped out ways of intensifying Soviet-Afghan cooperation in various spheres. Soviet-Afghan relations are now taking on a new quality. In conclusion I should like to thank the CPSU and the Soviet government for their strong support to and solidarity with the Afghan people at this important juncture of its history. ■

The New Constitution

The Constitution of Nicaragua was signed in the republic's capital on January 9. The signing ceremony was attended by deputies to the National Assembly, cabinet ministers, members of the National Leadership of the Sandinist National Liberation Front (SNLF), foreign delegations and members of the diplomatic corps. President Daniel Ortega announced that the new Constitution, the fundamental law of the country, discussed freely and comprehensively for the first time in the history of Nicaragua and approved by a majority vote in parliament, would enter into force on January 10. In keeping with the Constitution, a one-year state of emergency has been decreed throughout the country. In his statement Daniel Ortega described it as a forced measure called for by the unceasing U.S. aggression against the entire country rather than individual regions.

The Constitution formalizes the Nicaraguans' right to wage armed struggle to defend their homeland in the face of U.S. aggression. The character of the Nicaraguan revolution is explicitly defined as democratic, anti-imperialist, popular and Latin American. The principal socio-economic achievements of the revolution—such as an agrarian reform, which will proceed under state control—have been recorded. The Constitution notes that the national economy is mixed, but at the same time declares the priority development of the public sector and stipulates the role of the working people in running the affairs of the state, as well as in economic planning and production control.

The section of the Constitution concerned with foreign policy states that Nicaragua will pursue the principle of non-alignment, while rejecting every form of colonialism, neocolonialism, imperialism and racism.

The historic document began to be drafted two years ago by the National Assembly, elected in the first free elections in the history of Nicaragua on November 4, 1984. The Sandinistas won an impressive victory in those elections.

A representative Special Constitutional Commission of 22 deputies was established. It included 12 Sandinistas, 4 members of the Conservative Democratic Party, two members of the People's Social Christian Party and four more representatives of other parties. Delegations from the National Assembly visited countries in Latin America and on other continents to study experience in drafting constitutions. A subcommission for constitutional affairs for its part considered 24 detailed constitutional proposals submitted by different parties and organizations. An expert legal commission was also working. On February 21, 1986, the President of the National Assembly, Carlos Nuñez, submitted the first draft constitution to parliament. The draft was subsequently discussed by political parties and organizations and in May-June, at open meetings in which over 100,000 people participated.

A revised text of the Constitution was submitted to the National Assembly in September. It took 49 long and tempestuous parliamentary sessions to finalize it. Some approaches to the solution of problems that face the country, emerging in the course of work on the Constitution, were downright hostile to the people's cause. The opposition parties tried more than once to blackmail the Sandinistas, saying they would refuse to discuss the document when it was submitted to the Assembly. The polarization of forces occurred not only between individual parties but also within them.

The new Constitution guarantees every Nicaraguan the right to education. Photo: A class at the Simon Bolivar Electrical Engineering School, Managua.

Photo by V. Vyatkin

Some deputies from opposition parties refused to put their signatures to the Fundamental Law under various pretexts. But even those of them who signed the text of the Constitution openly disagree with some of its articles and with the policy of the SNLF. Conservative Eduardo Molina, for instance, says it is a "liberal bourgeois constitution with Marxist-Leninist content."

The ultra-leftists refused to sign the Constitution as well, saying they were opposed in principle to the mixed economy and that the new Constitution was counter to the interests of the proletariat both in its character and political and legal orientation.

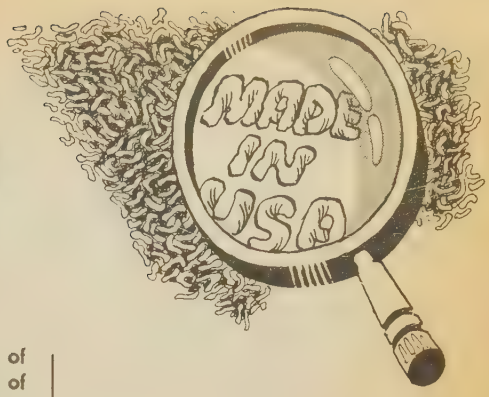
A deep split divided the Independent Liberal Party, the second largest party after the SNLF. The Liberals had already gone through a similar crisis in 1984, when on the eve of the elections the decision was taken by the followers of the party's right-wing chairman, Virgilio Godoy, not to contest the elections. Many rank-and-file Liberals refused to bow to the decision and, as a consequence, the Liberals are now the third largest parliamentary party. During debates on the Constitution, Virgilio Godoy, who became a deputy "against his will," took an obstructionist stand and maintained absolute silence. Five other Liberal deputies, contrary to the decision of the Godoy group (numbering nine), contributed to the drafting of the Constitution and signed it. Moreover, they initiated the establishment of a movement for unity and democratization in the Independent Liberal Party.

The debates on the draft Constitution and its promulgation forcefully demonstrated that, in spite of the complex domestic political situation, the Sandinist National Liberation Front is in full control and has become a recognized political force. It enjoys the widespread support of the mass of the population, who believe the Sandinistas are carrying out their social and economic pledges.

Vladimir DOLGOV
our own correspondent

Managua

Girding for Germ Warfare



SERGEI KORTUNOV

Another forgery has recently been made public in Washington. This time, to give it a semblance of authenticity, it was presented as a military intelligence report. The subject is the observance by the U.S.S.R. of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and Their Destruction.

The U.S. has tried on previous occasions to accuse the U.S.S.R. of violating this important international convention. Moscow refuted inventions about outbreaks of epidemics in Soviet territory and the alleged use of toxin weapons by the U.S.S.R. They were given the lie by highly qualified experts from various countries, the U.S. included.

Why is the U.S. trying to galvanize these fabricated accusations?

This is an obvious attempt to undermine existing international agreements in the field of disarmament, complicate relations between states, the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., in particular, sow seeds of doubt with regard to the honesty of the Soviet Union as a partner in curbing the arms race; and, last but not least, call the very convention into question.

Another point merits attention in this context. We know from experience that accusations of all sorts of "breaches" of international agreements on disarmament are advanced against the U.S.S.R. by the U.S. each time the latter gives the "green light" to new military programmes, and it becomes clear that these programmes are not compatible with the limitations imposed by the agreements. It looks as if the same trick is being used now.

New evidence of the Pentagon's intention to get down to the development of bacteriological weapons has recently become public knowledge.

Officially, military biological research in the United States is restricted to the "defence studies" stipulated by the appropriate clauses of the convention. This research is being carried on in Fort Detrick, Maryland. The centre employs up to 4,000 military and civilian experts and has a budget of about $20 million.

At the same time, the construction of a special laboratory for the study of bacteriological aerosols has started on the Dugway proving site, Utah. The Pentagon intends to spend $1.4 million on its construction in this fiscal year alone. Reportedly, the new centre's main task is to study especially dangerous aerosolized biological agents like the pathogens causing grave haemorrhagic fevers—the Lassa, Ebol and Marburg viruses. James Sasser, the American Democratic Senator, has said that the Dugway laboratory has the specific purpose of experimenting with biological and toxin weapons banned by the 1972 convention.

There is now open talk in the U.S. about the increasing military importance of bacteriological (biological) weapons. According to the Washington Post, a high-ranking U.S. Defence Department official said in August 1986 that bacteriological weapons using the latest in technology could assume immense military importance. We have changed our opinion of these weapons' military usefulness, he intimated, and now say that bacteriological weapons made on the basis of modern technology can be truly great.

Last autumn the American papers carried more information on the subject. The Wall Street Journal stressed, in particular, that the funds allocated for biological weapon research had been increased tenfold over the past five years.

The Pentagon claims that research in this field is of a purely defensive character, but experts say it is preparing to take a practical step towards the development of "an offensive biological potential." Private U.S. (and Israeli) companies, as well as a number of U.S. universities, are being drawn into this effort on a wide scale. Such is the truth about Washington's campaign.

The U.S. tactics at the second conference on the observance of the convention on the prohibition of bacteriological weapons, held in Geneva last autumn, pursued the same objectives.

In view of the participants being at one on the need to improve the control mechanism, our delegation suggested that an additional protocol be worked out and adopted for the purpose by a special conference of the convention's signatories, after the appropriate preparations have been made.

In compliance with the wishes of many states the Soviet side supported a number of confidence-building measures, such as the exchange of information about biological research centres (specifically, on their locations, and the amount and character of the work they do), the obligatory notification of every outbreak of an epidemic, and the formation of a group of experts to discuss new achievements in the field of biology pertaining to the observance of the convention.

Unfortunately, the proposals of the U.S.S.R. and other states were not embodied in appropriate decisions because of the American delegation's unconstructive and, in a number of cases, frankly obstructionist stand.

By opposing a special conference on control, the U.S. showed its unwillingness to undertake additional legal commitments in this field, or to let anything interfere with the implementation of its biological weapon development programmes.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and Their Destruction is the first measure towards genuine disarmament and an important part of the complex of treaties and agreements on arms race limitation now in force. Safeguarding and improving this international legal mechanism, which has proved its viability and effectiveness, is an immediate obligation of all states—especially those on which the maintenance of peace and international security chiefly depends.

It is from such positions that Moscow approaches everything achieved in this field, including the convention prohibiting bacteriological weapons.

Geneva-Moscow

Before the Bundestag elections

What Colour the Future?

From our own correspondent
ALEXANDER TOLPEGIN

Campaigning for elections to the Bundestag began with a vengeance in the F.R.G. immediately after the political lull of the Christmas and New Year holidays.

"Hot Phase"

The campaigning parties are to resolve different problems in the short finishing lap. The leaders of the alliance of the Christian parties, the CDU and its Bavarian brother, the CSU, are concerned about retaining their edge. Public opinion polls have been showing the growing popularity of the CDU/CSU since last autumn. TV and radio commentators and news analysts working for newspapers controlled by big capital are trying to convince their readers that the outcome of the elections is in fact a foregone conclusion: the current ruling coalition, which also includes the small Free Democratic Party, will remain in power. The mass media are thus trying, and not always unsuccessfully, to dishearten opposition supporters. Some commentators even say that the Christian parties could win an absolute majority and form a "black" coalition. Yet confidence of victory can easily turn into complacency. That is why the campaign manager of the CDU, the party's Secretary-General Heiner Geissler, is warning party functionaries that forecasts are not election results and that these will be known only in the night of January 25, when the polling stations have closed.

To infuse party followers with the fighting spirit, Geissler, in addition to the main election slogan of the CDU, "Keep on course, Germany!", came up with another one, which to the uninitiated sounds an absurdity: "A future instead of Red-Green." However, the West Germans understand the message perfectly well: only a government led by the CDU can give the Federal Republic a worthwhile future. But if the country is ruled by "Reds," that is, the Social Democrats, in alliance with the Greens, it will sink into chaos and even catastrophe.

In reality, there is no "Red-Green" alliance today. Moreover, the Social Democratic candidate for the Chancellorship Johannes Rau, Minister-President of North Rhine-Westphalia, has said from the outset that he is against any cooperation with the Greens and would fight for a Social Democratic majority. He gained such a majority in the latest land elections in North Rhine-Westphalia. Yet to repeat the success on a federal scale will be far more difficult. Telling defeats in last autumn's land elections in Bavaria and Hamburg made the Social Democratic leaders take a more realistic view of the situation. They refrain from predicting a majority for themselves, while keeping silence about possible cooperation with the Greens as well. Uncertainty about the Social Democrats' intentions hardly adds to their popularity. Yet the Social Democratic leaders think that Rau has a realistic chance of becoming Chancellor. The Social Democrats are hoping to rally party followers during the "hot phase" of the election campaign and overtake or at least catch up with their main rivals, the CDU/CSU, in a spurt to the finish.

The Free Democrats, as usual, are fighting for survival, to retain a foothold in the Bundestag. To do so under federal legislation, they need to collect at least 5 per cent of the vote. The yellow Free Democrat posters are addressed to those who do not want either the undivided rule of the CDU/CSU or the "Red-Green" coalition.

The Greens are, perhaps, more confident than the others. Many people thought four years ago that the young party was a flash in the pan on the political scene. Today no one doubts that the Greens will send deputies to the Bundestag and even increase their representation.

Promises and Facts

The parties of the current ruling coalition remained in power in March 1983 because they promised to pull the country out of a deep economic crisis, which they blamed on the Social Democrats who had headed the government till October 1982. Today they are hoping to win the elections by claiming that they have lived up to their promises. The economy is recovering, they say, prices are stable, the number of jobs has grown and in 1986 the gainfully employed, for the first time in many years, had their real wages increased.

The economic situation in the Federal Republic is undoubtedly better than it was in the crisis year of 1982. But was the recovery brought about by government policy? And are the prospects ahead really as cloudless as propagandists from the government camp are painting them?

Replies to these questions are furnished by a memorandum published late last year by progressive economists from Bremen, united in a working group called "For an alternative economic policy."

The economic recovery of 1983-86, they say, was the weakest in the history of the Federal Republic and was caused primarily by auspicious external conditions, which made possible a drastic expansion of exports.

As for the government's policy, they believe that it merely slowed down economic growth. A huge operation to redistribute the national income in favour of the rich has been carried out under the current ruling coalition. In four years the incomes of workers and employees (without taking account of inflation) grew by 10.5 per cent and the profits of proprietors and moneybags by 59.5 per cent.

The economic recovery by no means reduced unemployment. Conversely, in the fourth year of the recovery it was higher than in crisis-stricken 1982, and is in excess of two million. The situation could have been worse if the working people had not achieved, in the course of persistent strikes, and with the strong resistance of the government and proprietors, a reduction in the working week in some industries, which pushed up employment.

The memorandum points to clear signs of an imminent recession, which professional optimists from the government camp would prefer not to notice, such as growing difficulties with exports and a tendency for oil prices to rise.

The consequences of another crisis would be especially grave for the working people if current policy continues: unemployment is to grow by at least another million and the purchasing power of the population will further decline.

Drift to the Right

The CDU launched the "hot phase" with a rally in Dortmund. Dozens of trains and hundreds of buses brought about 60,000 CDU supporters to that city in the Ruhr considered, incidental-

ly, a stronghold of the Social Democrats.

In the Federal Republic's largest hall, the Westfalenhalle, as many as 20,000 people listened to speeches by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, other CDU leaders, and CSU leader Franz Josef Strauss.

Once again, Kohl used the election platform to make provocative statements about the socialist countries. He ascribed to the Soviet Union "claims to hegemony in Europe" and discovered "concentration camps" in the G.D.R. where "political prisoners" were held. Strauss did not discuss international affairs on that occasion. What he called for was "slough off" Germany's own history. It is time to emerge from the shadow of the Third Reich, he said. So one speaker told deliberate lies about concentration camps, while another suggested that real nazi death camps, in which millions perished, should be forgotten.

As we were returning to Bonn, a CDU press employee remarked that Helmut Kohl's speech should not be viewed as a government statement. What he meant to say was probably that a different, more balanced phraseology would be used in a government statement.

But the attacks made by Helmut Kohl in Dortmund are by no means fortuitous. The foreign policy election programme of the CDU/CSU breathes the same hatred of the U.S.S.R. and the other socialist countries, although its authors had had plenty of time for thought.

The German question is open and the Reich continues to exist, the programme claims. Federal Republic's treaties with socialist countries, according to them, do not contain any recognition of existing borders (although everyone knows that they effectively confirmed their inviolability now and in the future). The Federal Republic, furthermore, purports to have the right to speak for "all Germans," regardless of where they live.

The document approved by the CDU/CSU is a blueprint for another cold war, a programme of confrontation. The CSU openly demands a revision of official policy towards socialist countries. The leader of the land faction of that party in the Bundestag, Theodor Weigel, for instance, stated that the CSU was opposed to "a sequel to or a revised edition of the policy of détente of the 1970s."

Naturally, in the ruling coalition as well there are forces that understand the vital importance to the Federal Republic of good relations with its Eastern neighbours. Replying to Herr Weigel, Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher said that the Free Democrats would not allow the clock to be turned back to the time before the Eastern treaties had been concluded. But the question remains whether the Free Democrats would have enough influence to do so—provided the current coalition retains power.

As for the Christian alliance, there the tune is called by the right-wing grouping known as the Steel Helmets, so called after a reactionary organization of the 1920s. It is the Steel Helmets who are opposed to any progress towards disarmament, including the "zero option" on medium-range missiles in Europe, and insist on keeping even closer to Washington's foreign policy course. As for those in the CDU who once talked reasonably, for instance, about the "binding force of the Eastern treaties," today they prefer to keep their views to themselves.

Will the elections live up to the expectations of these people lining up to inquire about job vacancies at the Dortmund labour exchange!

From Stern (F.R.G.)

The Fight Will Go On

Some liberal Social Democratic weeklies are now publishing "scenarios" of possible developments in the event of Kohl remaining in office. They predict a dramatic worsening of relations with socialist countries, another "rearmament" involving nuclear missiles, the turning of the Federal Republic into a police state, the suppression of democratic rights and a dramatic decline in living standards.

Such scenarios, alas, are not the fruit of idle speculation. They merely project into reality the programme and goals of the conservative parties. But is a "black" future really imminent?

To begin with, the outcome of the elections is far from being a foregone conclusion. In early January, 20 per cent of voters were still undecided. The opposition is potentially strong enough to join battle with the coalition parties. Although the question of cooperation between the Social Democrats and the Greens has been put off, the closeness of the two parties on many important issues, such as demands for the renouncing of SDI and the withdrawal of American nuclear missiles, and support for the trade unions, gives reason to hope that cooperation is possible. The democratic forces outside those parties—non-party people, the Communists and the Democratic Socialists—have united in an election alliance calling itself the Peace List, which has called upon its supporters to cast their second votes for the Social Democrats or the Greens. This decision was prompted by the desire to rally together all those who would like the conservatives out of government.

Second, the country's future is not decided only at the polls and in the Bundestag. No one will ever again make the West Germans a faceless mass of yes-men. Those days are past. There are in the Federal Republic strong forces outside parliament, including the peace movements, movements for the protection of the environment and opposed to the suppression of democratic rights. Anti-fascist organizations are being replenished with young members. The working class is about to resume the struggle for a shorter working week. Any government and any parliament will have to reckon with these factors.

Bonn

REPORTS, NOTES

● EXPOSE

TÜRKES AGAINST WALLRAFF

Günter Wallraff published his "In the Abyss," describing the harsh exploitation of Turkish workers in the F.R.G., more than a year ago, and was at once harassed by West German right-wing extremists, in particular, by Franz Josef Strauss. Only recently, however, similar charges were made against him from a quite unexpected quarter. Alparslan Türkes, leader of the currently outlawed neofascist Turkish National Action Party (NAP) and known as the "Turkish Duce" in the Istanbul media, demanded that Wallraff be taken to court as his book was allegedly "commissioned from behind the Iron Curtain" and the author's objective was to "sow strife between Turks and Germans." This means Wallraff "serves communism." Türkes called him "a G.D.R. spy."

In his pronouncements, Hitler's Turkish admirer was far from achieving all he wanted: he merely called attention to the activities of the NAP storm troopers in the F.R.G., better known as the "grey wolves," whom Wallraff also mentions in his book. The gunmen of this fascist association have already killed hundreds and wounded thousands of trade unionists, Communists and activists of left-wing parties and progressive youth organizations. After the military took over in Turkey in 1980, the "grey wolves" moved to Western Europe, where more than a million and a half Turks had gone to earn a livelihood. Türkes's men now carry out "delicate" assignments for local businessmen. Using threats and violence, they try to prevent their compatriots from participating in trade unions, and associating with left-wing parties and organizations.

A whole network of "schools for the study of the Koran" has been established under the NAP aegis in the F.R.G. and West Berlin. Some 80 per cent of the children of Turkish immigrants are compelled to attend these schools, where they are indoctrinated in nationalism and religious fanaticism. The numerous "Islamic cultural centres," under cover of which at least 10,000 "grey wolves" operate, serve the same purpose. The law of this wolf pack, modelled on nazi Germany SS troops, runs: "Our actions are guided by neither logic nor independent thought. Whatever the leader orders is right." Türkes has enunciated as his paramount objective the creation of a "national socialist great Turkey" incorporating the territories of Hungary, Bulgaria, the southern U.S.S.R., Eastern Greece, Cyprus and Iran that are to be captured.

Türkes and his confederates have strong links with ultra-right-wing political circles, including the neonazis, whose leader Karl-Heinz Hoffmann stated in an interview to Hürriyet: "We also have Turks as members of our organization." Der Spiegel has published evidence revealing the close contacts, which include financial ties, maintained by Franz Josef Strauss with Turkish neofascist groupings. Metall, the magazine of the F.R.G. Metalworkers' Union, reports that one of the principal aims set out when Strauss met Türkes in Munich in April 1978 was to "generate a psychological climate conducive to the actions of the 'grey wolves' in the F.R.G."

Türkes has a special account, No. 10243246-47010111-5, at the Gemeinwirtschaft bank in Cologne. One of the basic sources of receipts accruing to the NAP treasury is the drug traffic, the scale of which may be deduced from the following example. A certain Cakir, a West German nightclub owner, deposited half a million marks in a single lump sum with the "grey wolves'" account in Frankfort on the Main. This nightclub was subsequently discovered to have served as one of the central entrepôts for the drug traffic. "From its headquarters in Heilbronn," the French magazine Révolution explains, "

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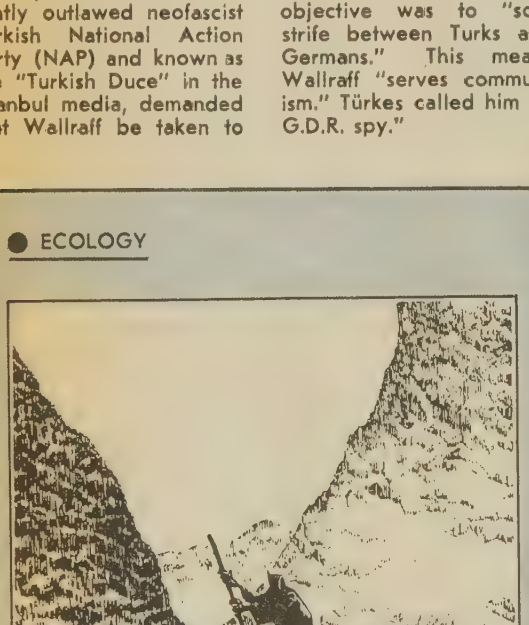
From Meta

● ECOLOGY



The Rhine today. In the waters of this river contaminated by chemical concerns Death feels quite at home and is on the lookout for anything still living along its banks.

From the International Herald Tribune (U.S.A.)

● RACISM

**The white farmer does not want a singl
around. If the black can't read what is
on the fence, the white farmer will jus
bullet through his head. This photogra
taken by a Reuters correspondent in
(South Africa).**

● "GAMES"

CARROTS AND CAR

In a milita
you steal t
forest, trying
a single twig
Suddenly you
behind a bus
gun and fire.
es the trigg

the whole world becomes one great orange-red splurge. That is the end, as your goggles are covered with carrot juice.

In that forest outside Bournemouth, Britain, not live ammunition but bullets filled with carrot juice are used. Anyone hit by a carrot bullet wipes off the spattered juice and retires to the pub for a pint. But he is worried: is that really the end?

The game, "hunt for the enemy's banner," was first suggested in the U.S. before being taken up by Ian Wolfeld, owner of a military hardware shop in Britain. He hired a staff of instructors and rented the nearby Hotel Dormy where dozens if not hundreds of employees of such reputable British firms as Philips Business Systems congregate several times a month. After breakfast participants in the "seminar" are given new military uniforms and transported in army lorries to the 11-hectare "combat zone." There they are divided into "fighting teams," after which carrot bullets whistle for the duration of a 40-minute-long battle to the death.

Though the participants are none too enthusiastic about running round the woods and risking a carrot kill, they play the "game" in earnest, as it has harsh practical consequences. On the basis of human behaviour in the "combat zone" firm owners do a psychological analysis and carry out personnel changes. If you are aggressive and resolute, you can expect promotion, but if you haven't "killed" enough victims, don't expect a rise. And if your goggles are spattered with carrot juice, you may be demoted, if not sacked. That will be the end for you.

When such "games" were started in Britain two years ago many protested, if only for the simple reason that the aggressiveness inculcated in the woods outside Bournemouth could manifest itself in ordinary life. However, "combat zone chief" Wolfeld dismisses the idea, as in real everyday business life there is "plenty of knifing," he says.

● REVANCHISM

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO BERLIN?

What unknown force has changed the city so much as to be barely recognizable? An earthquake? Or the eruption of a hitherto unnoticed volcano? And why is it only the G.D.R. capital that is affected and not the Western sectors under the control of the U.S., British and French military authorities? After all, the climatic and geographical conditions would seem to be the same.

It is a fact nonetheless that whereas West Berlin's historical and architectural gems are where they should be, noteworthy sites in the G.D.R. capital seem to have been swallowed up, with nothing but their outlines remaining... on postage stamps. The F.R.G. Federal Post Office has just issued a stamp to mark the city's 750th anniversary. Its designers laid the paint on thick for sites of interest in West Berlin. But when it came to the G.D.R. capital their creative genius was only up to silhouettes and mirages. The views of quarters who indeed prefer mirages, unable as they are to stomach the realities, are thus reflected on a postage stamp.

● CRIME

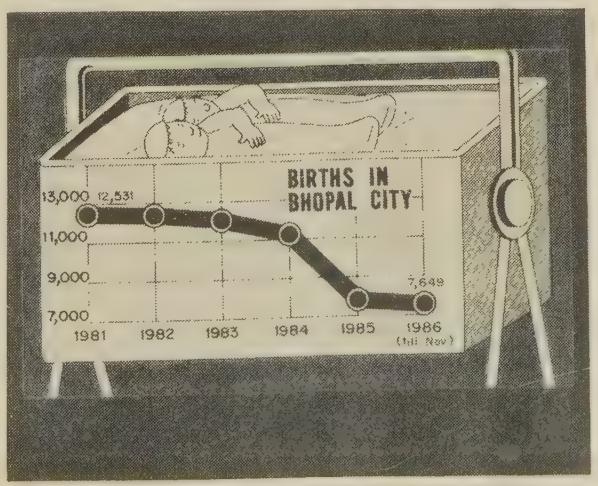
UNBORN CHILDREN

On the night of December 2, 1984, the Union Carbide plant in the Indian town of Bhopal spewed forth the highly toxic gas, methyl isocyanate. Suffocating fumes filled the streets, making people think doomsday had come. For hundreds that night was indeed the last. The death toll has now reached 2,355.

One should add to this tragic figure the list of unborn children. The magazine India Today, from which the graph below is reproduced, cites the following statistics:

As compared with 1984, Bhopal birth rates were 35 per cent less in 1985 and 25 per cent less in 1986. The average annual number of births in Bhopal had been 12,000. In 1985, however, only 7,842 babies were born, while 14 per cent of pregnancies terminated in the death of the unborn child. Before the catastrophe miscarriages and stillbirths had been as low as 2 per cent. According to doctors, a large number of males in the town are sexually impotent.

The night of the Union Carbide disaster is not over in Bhopal.



P. M. NABS THEM

With the help of his son, Netherlands Premier Rudolph Lubbers caught thieves attempting to steal the radio from his wife's car and handed them over to the police. Last October newspapers reported his courage and ingenuity when apprehending other thieves in the act of committing the same crime.

HIS EMPIRE STILL GROWING

"I am Number One!" France's leading press magnate Robert Hersant once announced on the front page of Le Figaro. He saw in the New Year by purchasing 24 per cent of the stock of the leading Belgian newspaper, Le Soir, overriding protests from its staff. According to unofficial sources, he offered as much as $19 million for the stock.

WINE ON ICE!

Austrian businessman Toni Kahlbacher, who manufactures various detergents, has solved a problem which has been a headache for the authorities for a whole year: what to do with the millions of litres of wine that crooks had laced with antifreeze.

The Austrian businessman proposed using the rejected "beverage" in a special mixture to deice roads. Laboratory analysis demonstrated its effectiveness at temperatures of as low as 28 degrees Centrigrade below zero. Moreover, the wine is not detrimental to the environment.

TOO REALISTIC

After several telephone calls from panic-stricken Swansea, Britain, with residents claiming that terrorists had attacked the local Brangwyn concert hall, a police patrol rushed to the spot to find that the explosions heard were merely imitation artillery fire. It appeared that at rehearsals of Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture" the musicians had exploded petards in empty rubbish bins for sound effects.

Problems of CMEA Reform

YURI SHIRYAEV,

Corresponding Member, U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

Cooperation among the CMEA member countries has recently been the subject of discussions at the highest level. The invariable conclusion has been that it is necessary to introduce new, advanced forms of economic exchange, improve the work of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and intensify production cooperation. The process which we call, for short, "CMEA reform" is exceedingly complex and multifaceted.

One of the more obvious problems is that the inter-sectoral division of labour, which has reached a high level over past decades, has ceased to be an instrument for furthering economic integration among the CMEA countries.

For example, the average annual growth of foreign trade between the CMEA countries (in constant prices) dropped from 9.4 per cent in 1971-75 to 5.3 per cent in 1976-80 and to 3.1-3.2 per cent in 1981-85. True, the 1980s have seen a similar trend in the world economy at large. But it has to be borne in mind that while producing a quarter of the world's national income, the CMEA countries occupy a modest place in world trade. To bring its foreign trade up to the level of production, CMEA would have to increase its foreign trade 2.5-3 times over. This is a measure of the huge untapped potential for international cooperation.

What to Change?

In 1960 the CMEA countries accounted for more than 10 per cent of world trade, while in 1985 they accounted for 9.6 per cent (of which 5.5 per cent was trade amongst themselves). In certain key areas, e. g. the exchange of scientific and technical services, CMEA occupies a very low place in world trade. This prompts the need to restructure the whole system of cooperation between the CMEA countries with an eye to the development and introduction of the latest technology.

It is high time the work of the CMEA countries and bodies was reoriented from "gross figures," i. e., the volume of export and import operations, to the introduction of the latest technology. This means major structural changes in production as well as in the system of the socialist division of labour.

It would be wrong to say that such a task had not been set in the past. But the objectives formulated earlier were not backed up by measures to ensure that these tasks were tackled on a consistent basis. Nor should we discount the subjective factor in the assessment of the community's production potential in the 1970s and early 1980s, the real state of our countries' economies and the world market.

Thus, the soaring of prices for oil and other fuels proved to be a disincentive to restructuring exports not only for fuel- and raw material-exporting countries but, paradoxically, for the importing countries as well. The relative cheapness of fuel in our foreign market meant, in effect, the disguised subsidizing of the production and export of energy- and material-intensive goods in the markets of third countries, creating an illusion of competitiveness (while in fact it was a case of the indirect and sometimes direct re-export of fuel and raw materials).

A thoroughly balanced look at the obtaining situation in production prompted a revision of long-term priorities and current objectives for cooperation among the CMEA countries. It is now plain that the genuine deepening of the international socialist division of labour, making it serve the task of intensifying production in the CMEA countries, directly depends on the level of scientific and technological progress.

An increased rate of progress requires a prompt response to changes in the range of goods and fluctuations in consumer demand, as well as a flexible production setup to enable it to react to current and foreseeable changes. Excessive centralization of decision making in foreign economic exchanges proved to be out of line with the modern level of productive forces, and the nature and requirements of the international division of labour. The centralized procedure is time-consuming, whereas today it is mobility, flexibility of production that determines its competitiveness and further progress.

The producers of goods and services—enterprises and the suppliers of new technology—have tremendous reserves. The introduction of direct links between them makes it possible to obtain detailed information on the partner's production potential and to improve the scientific and technical level of jointly produced goods faster. This also makes it possible to quickly solve specific questions of production, including the exchange of the means of mechanization and experience in labour organization. Finally, direct relations create an incentive (and responsibility) for both sides in the process of production.

New Integration Mechanism

The main feature of the economic mechanism of socialist integration is the close link between the economic interests of the state and those of the work collectives. Its theoretical basis can be expressed in the following formula: strategically important interaction "on the perimeter" of national economies is now being extended into the heart of the national economic complexes, thus dramatically increasing the number of "points of contact" between countries and changing the quality of their cooperation.

The penetration of integration processes into the heart of national economic complexes calls for a restructuring of the economic mechanism in the socialist countries to adjust it to different levels of cooperation. Planning

and settlement methods in direct relations between enterprises cannot be the same as in interstate relations.

The new concept of cooperation presupposes improvement in national economic mechanisms. Greater scope for initiative and responsibility on the part of enterprises in the foreign economic sphere has domestic implications as well. World practice shows that an enterprise incapable of producing competitive goods for export cannot effectively meet domestic demand either. Competitiveness, then, is first and foremost a measure of the ultimate economic efficiency of production, even if production is mainly geared to domestic consumption.

Along with measures to improve national economic mechanisms, the role of measures at CMEA level is also very great. It is clear that the international mechanism of the CMEA countries must be provided with the economic and organizational-legal instruments ensuring the implementation of the new concept of cooperation between them.

To illustrate, here are a few problems that present a scientific as well as a practical challenge.

Better economic substantiation of coordinated plans, i. e., involving enterprises in the coordination process. This is no easy task, considering that the dramatic rise in the number of cooperating partners (each enjoying varying degrees of autonomy in their activity) calls for a new pattern of effective management at national and international levels.

And yet the solution of this problem would yield far-reaching results as it would eliminate an evident contradiction in CMEA's activity, which has hitherto centred on sectoral commissions representing industries as managerial bodies while the producers and consumers of goods had virtually no say in concrete decision making.

Setting up joint enterprises and associations, promoting bilateral ties between CMEA countries to gain the necessary experience in order to move on to multinational cooperation.

Effective use of commodity-money instruments. The dogma, convenient to monetary experts, that these levers are "secondary" must be discarded. Actually, these levers are called upon to buoy up CMEA's mutual trade market and help control the quality of goods marketed. An improved CMEA monetary and financial system must guarantee true convertibility of mutual settlements (ideally, not only within CMEA) and the establishment and use of sound rates of exchange.

The CMEA monetary and financial commission has been working for some time to define the exchange rates of the national currencies against the transferrable ruble and each other. That work, however, has remained largely the commission's internal concern and has had no impact on the practical state of affairs.

It is a very serious question. Many specialists feel that the transferrable ruble, which has no value content of its own and is divorced from national monetary systems, would inevitably cease to be truly transferrable. In the end, it would become a conventional settlement unit, fit merely to state the price of goods in bilateral trade.

Creating conditions for the mutually beneficial concentration of interstate production and scientific-technical activity. The experience of large-scale projects (for example, the manufacture of equipment for atomic power plants), given the present level of productive forces, shows that this is the only way to attain advanced standards in production and export. The 93 key problems identified in the Comprehensive Programme for scientific and technological progress of the CMEA countries up to the year 2000 should be tackled with a view to creating major international scientific-production systems that would be a match for the TNCs in advanced capitalist countries. Needless to say, socialist international scientific-production systems must use the effects of concentration in forms that are compatible with the principles of relations among socialist countries.

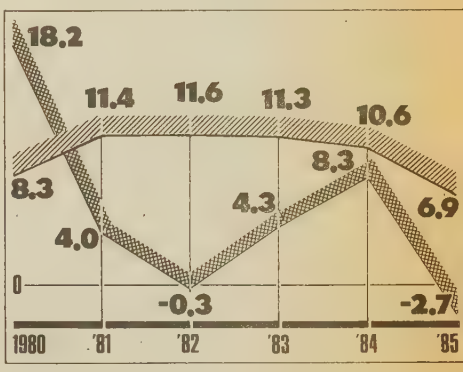
Concerted Strategy

In accelerating their development, the CMEA countries will make their economies more open to the world economy. This process should be governed by a concerted strategy. Two factors have to be taken into account.

First, the concentration of the CMEA countries' efforts on implementing the Comprehensive Programme. The integration mechanism is expected to speed up technical reconstruction of the national economies which would help to stem the unfavourable trend of the gradual decline of the proportion of high-technology products and technological achievements in the exports of the CMEA countries.

The second factor is the need to counter the drive of the most advanced capitalist countries to monopolize the international market of new technology. Clearly, this challenge cannot be met by simply expanding the import of most up-to-date equipment or licences. The real answer is the consistent tapping of the scientific and technological potential of socialism to develop new technologies and new systems of machines.

DYNAMICS OF CMEA COUNTRIES' COMMODITY TURNOVER
(per cent)



with one another

with industrialized capitalist states

Mutually beneficial technological exchange can also benefit from the use of new forms of cooperation with Western firms, including the pooling of potential to introduce or improve new technology.

Collective measures to enhance the technical level of production and the modernization of the export pattern will, in the short-term perspective, make the CMEA countries not only active and competitive exporters but also increase their import capacity and the size of their internal markets.

■

Bomb for Europe?

The British and French nuclear arsenals

ALEXANDER LEBEDEV

How important are these arsenals in the overall nuclear strategic balance between East and West? How much of an obstacle are they on the way to the nuclear-free world envisaged in the three-stage plan for nuclear disarmament put forward by Mikhail Gorbachev a year ago?

Whether mankind is to move from a nuclear into a non-nuclear age and when now largely depends on the United States, but also, to no small degree, on the two other Western nuclear powers, Britain and France. Their reaction to Reykjavik, however, was close to panic—like a child from whom a favourite toy is being taken away. Strangely, even Bonn found a non-nuclear perspective frightening.

How is this to be accounted for? Is it just another spectacle being acted out on the "Atlantic stage"? Or are Britain and France really so attached to their nuclear brainchild that they are unable to part with it now (which, incidentally, no one is asking them to do) or in the future?

How Britain Went Nuclear

A good number of prominent nuclear physicists were working in the British Isles before and in the early years of the war. Many of them had been spirited away from the continent by the British secret services under the noses of the nazis (along with quantities of heavy water). Britain was well advanced in the development of the new, "ultimate" weapon.

Subsequently, the scientists and the research equipment were, for security reasons, moved to Canada whence, under an agreement between Roosevelt and Churchill, they were transferred to the U.S. It looked like a joint Anglo-American enterprise, a nuclear dimension to the "special relationship" between the two countries. Gradually, however, classified information came to be withheld increasingly from London until the McMahon law passed by the U.S. Congress in 1946 completely barred the British from the holy of holies of American military secrets (the law was only amended in 1958).

Britain, loth to be in the position of a rejected partner, set about developing its own nuclear weapon, first under the Labour government of Attlee and then, with renewed energy, under Churchill. In 1952 it held a successful atom bomb test in Australia, followed by a hydrogen bomb test in 1957.

Britain's nuclear potential was intended, of course, to supplement the Western military arsenal, and also to scare the peoples of its crumbling empire. "I felt that this force was important for Britain, just as similar force would be for France," Harold Macmillan * said. "It was the symbol of independence and showed that we were not just satellites or clients of America." Possession of a nuclear weapon created an illusion of equality.

It has to be said for the sake of fairness that London took a guarded and responsible view of the formidable weapon, all the more so as, having accepted U.S. nuclear-armed bombers in its territory, Britain automatically became a target for a Soviet retaliatory strike. Both Attlee and Churchill, fearful of the adventurism of the Pentagon generals (who pressed for the use of the atom bomb in the 1950s, first in the Korean war and then in Vietnam) made repeated trips to Washington to restrain U.S. presidents from rash moves.

This did not, however, prevent London from seeing its nuclear weapon as an important instrument in atomic-age diplomacy and a symbol of belonging to the select nuclear club.

The British nuclear arsenal began to lose its value with the advent of the era of satellites and ballistic missiles. Bombers became obsolete as a means of delivery and the development of the British Blue Streak missile was making slow progress.

London turned to Washington for help. However, the British were in for a disappointment. Its requests met with coolness in Washington. Influential officials—Defence Secretary Robert McNamara, Under-Secretary of State George Ball and others—tried to talk President John Kennedy out of giving American missiles to London. In the summer of 1962 McNamara openly spoke out against sharing nuclear weapons with the allies (Macmillan described his speech as "foolish").

Many people in the U.S. at the time spoke in favour of letting the British nuclear forces die a natural death, as they would grow obsolete. They cited, not without reason, the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the situation getting out of control. But Washington had other motives as well. It hoped to take advantage of the transition to a new generation of weapons —missiles—to assure its nuclear missile monopoly in the Western world.

Kennedy, however, did not want to risk further humiliating the privileged partner. In December 1962, after an arduous negotiation in Nassau (in the Bahamas), an agreement was signed under which the U.S. was to sell missiles for the Polaris submarines.

But Britain had to pay a heavy price. "The Americans pushed us hard and may have 'out-smarted' us altogether. It is very hard to judge," Harold Macmillan wrote later. Nevertheless, it is possible to judge. In return, Britain gave the Americans a submarine base in Holy Loch, Scotland. In addition, Macmillan agreed, reluctantly, to consider the American "multilateral nuclear force" project (MNF), designed to meet the nuclear claims of Bonn and other American European allies.

The Labour government of Harold Wilson, which succeeded the Conservatives, honoured the Nassau agreement, with the exception of one point. Mindful of the opposition in Britain to the prospect of the F.R.G. getting a nuclear weapon, Wilson resorted to a deft manoeuvre (offering the patently unrealistic Atlantic nuclear force project) to torpedo the "multilateral navy," a brainchild of McNamara.

As a result, the basis of the independent British nuclear force was formed by five Polaris submarines. The status of this force, however, is somewhat ambiguous; while the submarines and the warheads are manufactured in Britain, the enriched uranium for them comes from the U.S., the charges are tested in Nevada, and targeting is done jointly with U.S. headquarters through American intelligence satellites. The British nuclear force has been placed under NATO command, with London allowed to make independent use of it only if its "highest national interests" are threatened.

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* Harold Macmillan (Lord Stockton), one of the leaders of the Conservative Party in Britain, Prime Minister between 1957 and 1963, died on December 31 last year, aged 92. He was the last of the generation of British statesmen who started their careers at a time when Britain ruled a vast empire, and had to modify its policy in the changed conditions.

"Some independence!" exclaimed Liberal MP Paddy Ashdown.

The French Force de Frappe

The development of the French nuclear force followed a different course. Work in the field had begun under the Fourth Republic in the late 1940s, and was stepped up when General de Gaulle came to power in 1958. If Britain had been able to acquire atomic and nuclear bombs, the General saw no reason why France, which had comparable resources and scientific potential, could not join the "nuclear club." Paris saw this as a symbol of restored French greatness, its actual and not merely formal return to the category of a great power. At that time de Gaulle did not rule out nuclear cooperation with the U.S. and Britain.

In fact, in 1958 Paris made a confidential proposal to Washington and London to set up a kind of "triumvirate" to run the West's affairs and pursue a concerted policy in the Third World. It was understood that in that case the U.S. would cooperate with France in the nuclear field on the same terms as with Britain.

However, while Washington reluctantly accepted the obligations stemming from its "special relationship" with Britain, it had no intention of extending the same terms to Paris. Eisenhower's reply was seen by de Gaulle as humiliating, which spurred the French effort to develop its own nuclear weapon. In 1960 the French tested their atomic device in the Sahara. However, a good deal of effort was still required to create a battle-effective nuclear force. The French thought cooperation with Britain highly desirable in view of a certain asymmetry in their achievements in the nuclear missile field. The British had their own nuclear warheads and the French had their own missile. Cooperation seemed logical and, on the eve of the Anglo-American meeting in Nassau, de Gaulle tried to persuade Macmillan to that course, stressing the prospects of West European integration and the need for greater independence from the U.S.

The British Prime Minister, who needed French backing for Britain's entry into the Common Market, was not against de Gaulle's idea but said he would leave the last word to Washington. Washington's word, uttered in Nassau, reminded de Gaulle of Churchill's wartime warning that if Britain had to choose between France and America it would always choose the latter.

When Paris realized that London's position remained unchanged, it decided to go it alone. As if to spite the British, de Gaulle signed in 1963 the Elysée treaty of cooperation with the F.R.G. and stepped up work to build an independent nuclear potential, which came to be known as force de frappe (strike force). The idea of Anglo-French nuclear cooperation was shelved but, as later events showed, not buried.

The French strike force comprised a fleet of submarines (soon to be brought up to seven), 18 ballistic missiles in silos on the Albion plateau and Mirage bombers.

In addition, the French troops stationed in the F.R.G. have Pluton tactical nuclear missiles and the British Army on the Rhine is equipped with U.S.-made Lance missiles.

A comparison of the British and French nuclear forces in the 1960s reveals an underlying difference. The French military doctrine of the time was based on the "all azimuths" strategy. To be sure, the use of the French strike force against the United States was highly unlikely, but it could well serve to deter the F.R.G. if the Elysée treaty began to split at the seams.

At critical moments under de Gaulle (as during the Caribbean crisis in 1962) Paris made no secret of whose side its nuclear forces were on, but for all that France always distanced itself from the more adventurist U.S. acts, for example, in Indo-China or in the Middle East. It withdrew from the NATO military organization.

"The Weak Not So Weak Any More"

Let us look at the state of affairs today. Both London and Paris feel that their nuclear forces are obsolescent and are planning a drastic modernization in the 1990s. Both capitals tend to be overmodest about the size of their nuclear potentials (just a few per cent of the Soviet one).

This is not so, even if one compares present levels, not to speak of tomorrow. Today, Britain and France are estimated to possess between them about three hundred nuclear warheads.

Cartoon by N. Shcherbakov

As a result of modernization, they will have about five hundred each by the beginning of the 1990s. This makes a combined total of thousand warheads. By the year 2000 the figure will have grown to some 1,500, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. But it could be much higher for the simple reason that the French M-4 and M-5 missiles, to replace the M-20s, and the Trident-2 (D-5) system, to replace the British Polarises, can carry different numbers of warheads depending on the modification.

In the opinion of many experts, in the 1990s Britain will probably have not five hundred, but over a thousand nuclear warheads (1,088). This figure can be doubled by adding the French potential. The two countries' nuclear forces would then constitute a large percentage of the Soviet nuclear potential (even strategic, not to speak of the European potential).

Referring to the alleged weakness of the French nuclear force several years ago, former French minister Jean-Pierre

Chevènement remarked: "The weak is not so weak anymore." And Colonel Jonathan Alford, deputy director of the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, has said that Britain and France have no grounds—military (under the pretext of weakness) or political—to refrain from nuclear weapon cuts. This opinion is shared by Thomas Hirschfeld, a former head of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

All this is being said with reference to the present situation. But the introduction of Tridents would increase the British nuclear potential 16-fold, according to Neil Kinnock. The D-5 missiles, in their speed and accuracy, belong to the category of first-strike weapons, as both British and American experts believe. But if the existing Polaris potential is an adequate deterrent, why increase it? This is the question being asked by many British experts, a question all the more relevant now that the prospect of cuts in American and Soviet nuclear forces is being discussed.

Why, indeed? After all, London and Paris have repeatedly stated that if the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. make deep cuts in their nuclear forces, they will follow suit. Even after Reykjavik, when the British and French leaders, contrary to their former declarations, have tended to look on the idea of a nuclear-free world as at best a goal for a very remote future, they still magnanimously agree to the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. eliminating half their strategic weapons.

Suppose this does happen. The Soviet and American strategic potential would then comprise 6,000 warheads on each side. Britain and France would meanwhile have increased their forces by at least 5 or 7 times. Some two thousand Anglo-French warheads to 12,000 Soviet ones is one thing, but the same number constitutes a third of 6,000. Combined with 6,000 U.S. warheads, they would give the West a considerable lead. The British and French nuclear weapons would make the West's superiority even more impressive if a "zero option" in medium-range missiles were to materialize.

The arithmetic involved is simple enough, and so are the politics: to try to gain an edge on the U.S.S.R. under the pretext of the "independence" (for which read "not counting") of the British and French nuclear forces. These forces are independent of the Soviet Union, but not of the U.S. and NATO. This is so not only because of the formal status and level of operational interaction between the British, French and American nuclear forces, but also because of the dramatic change in the policies of Britain, France and their closest allies.

Let us think back to the 1960s. At that time the French and British leaders, like their West German counterparts, made repeated moves towards détente in Europe and the world.

London (under a Conservative government) played a positive role in the drafting of the 1963 treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, and of the 1967 nuclear non-proliferation treaty (under Labour), as well as in the early stages of the tripartite talks on a total ban of all nuclear weapon tests. Can Britain in the 1980s boast of at least one notable constructive idea to help break the deadlock in the disarmament negotiations, or check the arms race?

In France, too, much has changed since the time when de Gaulle dreamed of a "united Europe" from the Atlantic to the Urals on the basis of "détente, concord and cooperation." The leaders who have since come to power espouse a different philosophy. There has been a thaw in Franco-American relations as the once sharp divergences on many international issues have been blunted. The word "Atlanticism" has lost its former negative connotation in the French lexicon. Correspondingly, the positions of Paris and London have drawn closer together. The French no longer describe Britain as the American Trojan horse in Europe.

The degree of harmony in transatlantic relations should not of course be overestimated: friction and fierce arguments recur in the Washington-London-Paris-Bonn "quadrangle" and in the Anglo-French-West German "triangle." New axes are being formed and once stable politico-geometrical figures are falling apart. Contradictions persist and will not go away.

But we are not here concerned with this aspect of the objective processes at work in the Western world. Rather, we would like to draw attention to the following facts. While 10-15 years ago the West European countries came up with independent initiatives that tended to improve the international climate and to some extent induced the U.S. to take (or contemplate) steps in the same direction, nothing of the kind can be observed today.

The reverse seems to be the case. London, Paris and Bonn are anxious to warn Washington (much, one suspects, to its pleasure) not to be carried away by an accommodation with Moscow. They seem almost genuinely concerned lest the U.S. should "over-reduce" its strategic weapons (which are meanwhile being increased), lest the Americans should be too hasty in removing their medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe (while in the meantime more and more of them are being deployed).

It is in this context that one has to assess the role of the British and French nuclear forces both as a military and political factor on the side of NATO and the West, whatever their formal status.

It is no accident, perhaps, that the British and French nuclear potentials are often referred to as Anglo-French. This may not be so in legal and operational terms. Not yet. But the idea of close cooperation between the two nuclear submarine fleets periodically becomes the subject of lively discussion, especially when the Anglo-American nuclear cooperation agreement is up for renewal or the problem of modernization arises.

In the early 1970s, the London papers wrote that Britain was going to offer to sign a "nuclear pact" with France. There was of course a good deal of exaggeration in this, as well as a two-pronged diplomatic ploy. London sought to curry favour with Paris to get into the EEC. By the same token, it wanted to blackmail Washington should it begin to have second thoughts about its nuclear alliance with the British.

Eventually, the problem of Britain's entry into the Common Market was resolved and the U.S. extended the Anglo-American nuclear cooperation agreement. Michel Debré, the then French Defence Minister, commented that France should now wait for another date with Britain in the creation of the next generation of nuclear weapons. Such a moment has now come, and contacts between the two capitals have become more active. During their Paris visit last autumn, David Steel,

leader of the British Liberal Party, and David Owen, leader of the Social Democratic Party of Britain, discussed the possibility of nuclear cooperation between the two countries, notably the prospect for having the French M-4 missile replace Tridents on British submarines.

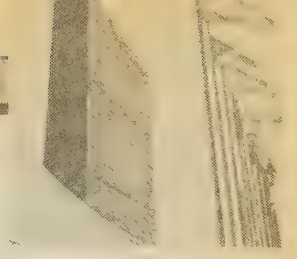
Margaret Thatcher, during her visit to Paris in November of last year, avoided giving a clear answer on the possibility of concrete cooperation, but did not deny that the subject may come under discussion. Speculation on this score is undoubtedly fuelled by the statements of the French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac (for example, in his speech at the assembly of the Western European Union in early December) on the need for a "European defence" backed up by an Anglo-French nuclear deterrent.

It is notable that the Bonn government looks at such ideas with keen interest (the Social Democrats on the whole support the British Labour Party's line on renunciation of the nuclear weapon). It looks as if the F.R.G. is still hoping to gain access to nuclear weapons rather than just granting its territory for these weapons. Bonn would like to see the Anglo-French "nuclear bomb" as a "European deterrent" and would like to have a say in decisions on its use, possibly within the framework of the Western European Union, which is now being revived.

Whether or not a "European nuclear force" will ever be formally organized, one thing is clear even today. The nuclear forces of Britain and France, separately or together, represent a formidable weapon targeted on the U.S.S.R. Moscow's tolerance of it does not mean that it does not notice them. Simply the U.S.S.R. is trying not to complicate the process of reduction of the two largest nuclear potentials—the Soviet and the American. The British and French nuclear forces remain outside the brackets, as it were, at their present level. But to go ahead and build them up, while pretending that nothing is happening, is less than gentlemanly, to say the least.

How do British and French politicians justify their insatiable passion for nuclear warheads? This will be the subject of our next article. ■

UNITED NATIONS



The Media Must Switch to a Positive Approach

"We are being strangled by the information monopoly of the United States and some of its partners. We do not have enough fresh air. The spiritual life of the people, its culture, is being crippled," a delegate from one of the newly independent countries said bitterly in the Special Political Committee at the recently closed 41st session of the U.N. General Assembly, where problems of world news communication were discussed.

Boris PYADYSHEV, the Soviet delegate to the Special Political Committee, was asked by New Times to comment on the main points and results of this discussion.

What was the central issue of the discussion and in what way did it differ from previous ones?

The debate in the Special Political Committee was quite acute, for politics, economics and, naturally, ideology find concentrated expression in the field of information. It mirrored the complexity of the questions discussed at the plenary sittings of the 41st General Assembly.

Together with calls for a new international information order, delegates stressed more categorically than before the need to change the very spirit, trend and content of the work of the mass media. "Building a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world requires a revolutionary transformation of the outlook and education of people and nations in the spirit of peace, mutual respect and tolerance." This idea was stated, somewhat later, in the Delhi declaration signed by Rajiv Gandhi and Mikhail Gorbachev. It was this approach that determined the course of discussions. Progress towards disarmament and détente in the military sphere, it was stressed, will be difficult, if not impossible, unless the media switch to a positive approach.

You said that the debate in the committee was acute. What caused deepest concern to the delegates?

Not merely concern but, I would say, serious alarm was caused by the fact that the arms race is being accompanied by a campaign of ideological hostility and misinformation whipped up by the forces who rely on power politics and strive for illusory military superiority.

The so-called "free" press, radio and television have long been controlled by subtle methods, and their work is covertly manipulated and directed to follow a definite line. The limits of the permissible are being overstepped and ethics brushed aside in an attempt to create the image of an enemy, with ordinary people and whole nations depicted as a hostile force.

A great many people in the United States have been disturbed by the officially promulgated nonsense about the "Soviet threat," and constant warnings from the White House that "the Russians are coming!"

Over 200 years ago, the legendary American Paul Revere alerted his compatriots with the warning "the British were on the march." The British were indeed advancing to put down the rebellious colonies. In our day the paraphrased warning of Paul Revere is a bad example of plagiarism. The absolutely groundless warning "the Russians are coming" is disastrous for the moral health of the American nation. Nevertheless, it can be heard in the speeches of the President, members of his government, Congressmen, generals, and in the media. And this propaganda is having its effect on Americans, who are beginning to think that the Russians are indeed about to attack the United States.

And the Americans are not being pitted only against the reds. Cries about the black, Latin American and Asian threat have recently been heard more and more loudly.

At the sittings and in the lobbies of the session there was much talk about the serial "Amerika" now being made by ABC television. The occupation of the United States solely by the Russians did not seem enough for the authors of this serial. That is why in the film, set in 1996, Asians and Latin Amerians too invade the United States, and, moreover, under the U.N. flag. This was seen as an insult to the United Nations, and its public information office protested to the U.S. authorities. But Washington scornfully ignored the opinion of the international community.

Did the session bring nearer the solution of problems related to the establishment of a new information order?

The discussion highlighted the urgent need for radical change in the sphere of international information. Many delegates pointed out that the present situation is becoming increasingly anachronistic and reflects, as the Algerian representative Abdallah Baali said, the customs of last century based on domination, lack of mutual understanding and distrust.

Striking evidence of information imperialism was cited in the course of discussion. Four Western agencies control 80 per cent of the daily news disseminated in the newly independent countries. Three quarters of the television programmes and half the films shown in the Third World states, as well as nearly all the commercial information used in them are produced in the United States. This explains why the developing nations are decisively raising the question of creating a new information order that would help them to counteract the political and cultural expansion of the West.

This demand is fully supported by the Soviet Union.

And what about Western countries?

About 15 Western countries stuck together, so to say, but there was no unity between them. Many of them understand the need for changes in the world information sphere, but are not in a hurry to effect these changes.

When the resolution drafted in the committee on the basis of proposals advanced by developing nations was put to the vote, only the United States voted against. This is one more proof of Washington's increasing international isolation.

The Soviet proposal for holding in Moscow a Helsinki Conference follow-up meeting on the development of humanitarian cooperation is evidently consonant with the issues which were discussed in the committee. What can this meeting bring to those directly working in the mass media and to readers of newspapers or televiewers?

We attach serious importance to the holding in Moscow of a conference on humanitarian issues and regard preparations for it as a very responsible matter. The Soviet Union wants this conference to be successful and productive.

The 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has set a clear-cut course for a broad democratization of Soviet society, and much has already been done in this respect. The Soviet leadership is boldly raising questions of openness ("glasnost"). Favourable possibilities have appeared for contacts in various fields, information included.

Those who are really concerned with improving matters in the humanitarian field will come to Moscow for an honest dialogue. Those who are really striving for a new information order will make their contribution to the fruitful discussion. The conference will show who favours genuine cooperation in the humanitarian field and who intends to use this question in their psychological and political struggle.

This does not at all mean that Soviet people want to see this conference as plain sailing. They are, of course, not afraid of discussions, even the most acute.

How can the media help shape a new way of thinking?

People have got tired of the escalation of unscrupulous propaganda. A sharp and quick turn is needed in the sphere of information regarding its quality and content.

It is very important, first of all, to orient the press, television, radio and other mass media towards helping to reinforce positive tendencies in world affairs, towards helping to bring about détente in the military field, remove the threat of war, and ensure progress in the limitation and reduction of weapons of all types, nuclear-missile weapons above all. Let me recall here what the Soviet and Indian leaders said in their Delhi declaration: "The propaganda of war, hatred and violence should be forbidden and hostile perceptions with regard to other nations and peoples abandoned."

International information should also be oriented towards helping to strengthen the climate of confidence among nations and states, show the national, historical and cultural values of other peoples, and their contribution to world civilization, and describe with sympathy the life of ordinary people in countries near and far.

Lastly, it is very important that the information work be conducted in a civilized spirit, a spirit of respect.

These are, one would think, simple but essential norms of behaviour. They have been placed on the agenda by the course of world developments. Our ideal is not power politics but the influence exercised by politics. This is what a new political thinking means. ■

The all-China conference on problems in agriculture, held in Peking, summed up the preliminary results of the past agricultural year in the country. The gross output of farm products was 4.4 per cent up on the 1985 figure, and grain output amounted to 390 million tons—ten million more than in 1985. At the same time it was pointed out that grain, cotton and sugar-cane production had fallen short of planned figures.

What the Reform Has Brought

The restructuring of the economic management mechanism in the Chinese countryside with its population of over 800 million has brought markedly good results. The output of food, sideline products and raw materials for light industry has risen considerably. On the whole, this has provided favourable conditions for the further growth of the national economy.

The gradual changeover from semi-natural to commodity production in agriculture has brought about a rapidly growing demand on the part of individual peasant households for the producer goods manufactured by industry, thus enlarging the market for industrial products to an unprecedented extent.

Qualitative changes are taking place in the agricultural sector: production conditions are improving, peasants' welfare and cultural standards rising, and advanced farming practices becoming widespread.

Despite the rapid growth of industry, light industry in particular, agriculture remains the basis of the Chinese economy. This is evidenced, for instance, by the fact that the state's incomes from the marketing of farm produce inside the country and hard currency earnings from its export sales are increasing from year to year. In 1985 alone, the Chinese countryside paid the state 18.83 billion yuans in various taxes. This is 3.1 times higher than in 1978, i.e., before the introduction of household contracts in agriculture.

Thanks to the agricultural reform, peasants' living standards are steadily improving. Of late, however, the growth rate of their incomes has slowed down due to the rising prices of manufactured products, producer goods, fuels and mineral fertilizers. A survey of 67,000 peasant households nationwide (without Tibet whose inclusion would bring down the average figure considerably) has revealed that the per capita income in the Chinese countryside constituted 254.17 yuans (about 70 dollars) in the first nine months of 1986, i.e., 24.1 yuans more than in the cor-

The Chinese Countryside Today

GRIGORY ARSLANOV

The agricultural reform started in the late seventies has brought many changes to the Chinese countryside. In the article which follows, a TASS correspondent in Peking describes these changes in some detail.

responding period of 1985. But whereas in 1985 growth rates constituted 29.2 per cent, in 1986 they went down to 10.5 per cent (even to 6.2 per cent, with the price rise taken into account).

Chinese newspapers explain the fact of grain production falling short of target figures by adverse weather conditions in certain parts of the country last year. Writing in the magazine Hungqi, Du Rongshen, director of the State Council research centre for Chinese countryside development, admits that another reason for this is the decline in the peasants' interest in grain growing. Sidelines and rural industrial plants bring quicker profits than crop farming, with the result that the peasants want to switch over to these more rewarding areas. At the end of 1985, over 60 million peasants were occupied in areas other than agricultural production.

However, the development of agriculture, the rural industry included, and the rise of commodity production in the countryside have not automatically brought an abundance of foodstuffs or a fall in consumer goods prices. At the beginning of November 1986 the prices of milk, dairy products—and, consequently, of many other food products—went up by almost 50 per cent in Peking. Nevertheless, demand for farm products in the capital is greatly in excess of supply, which inevitably leads to a further rise in prices.

Intensive housing construction has lately been in progress in rural areas. Since 1979 as many as 42.6 billion square metres of housing have been built in the Chinese countryside (workers' settlements included), which exceeds the total for the preceding 30 years since the formation of the People's Republic of China. At present, there are 17.8 square metres of housing per every resident of the Chinese countryside.

Despite the obvious achievements of Chinese agriculture, a substantial proportion of peasants are still unable to provide their families with enough food and fuel. Official statistics put about 50-60 million people—mainly in the areas inhabited by national minorities—below the poverty line.

The Adaptive Planning System

The agricultural reform adds up to the replacement of centralized planning by directive with adaptive planning. Previously, peasants had to fulfil crop production quotas set for them from above. They handed in all their produce to the state, and received their share from a centralized stock made up of the surpluses left over after the fulfilment of the obligatory plan assignments. At the end of the seventies, after the introduction of the household contract system, peasants were granted the right to sell their surplus produce on the open market at market prices, and to use the land plots allotted to them under the contracts at their own discretion on the obligatory condition that they met the required quota of produce sales to the state.

In 1985 the uniform state purchasing system was abrogated and "floating prices" for all farming and sideline products (except grain and cotton) were introduced with a view to giving the peasants an additional incentive to more efficient work. Now the peasants can plan their output with the requirements of the market in mind and, on fulfilling their contract terms, sell their surpluses of grain, cotton and other products on the open market.

The functions of central and provincial planning bodies have changed. They are no longer obliged to set detailed production quotas. Instead, these bodies draw up only long-term plans for five or more years ahead. Their job now is to analyze market trends and determine the population's food requirements.

Consequently, the state plan for farm produce output is now drawn up not on the basis of directives submitted to the planning bodies from above, but on the basis of information coming in from the countryside, with the producers'

Used trucks are given capital repairs and sold to peasants.

opinions and market requirements taken into account, and with final production targets brought in line with the needs of the state.

The contract system of purchasing is an important element in adaptive planning. Contracts between local purchasing organizations and peasant households are signed before the agricultural season begins. The contracts stipulate the amount and quality of produce to be supplied, set its price, and specify the volume of deliveries of mineral fertilizers, chemicals, diesel fuel (if tractors are used) and other industrial products at fixed prices, as well as the sum of credits issued to peasants in advance. Under the contracts, the peasants have to meet, first and foremost, the quotas of farm produce sales to the state. Here the state's and the peasants' interests often clash. Naturally, the peasants prefer to produce things that bring in a large profit on the market. The past few years, for instance, have seen a sharp increase in the output of cotton, which has led to the accumulation of a surplus. The state reduced its purchasing price at the beginning of 1985, and the peasants immediately reacted by reducing output by a third as compared with 1984, when the cotton yield amounted to six million tons (in China cotton output is estimated in terms of yarn, not of raw cotton).

With the abrogation of planning by directive, the economic links between the state and millions of peasants have become still closer. Their interrelationships are regulated not by injunction but by the economic mechanism. If his performance is poor, a peasant is no longer criticized at a meeting. Failure to comply with contract terms deprives him of the right to buy mineral fertilizers, diesel fuel and consumer goods at fixed prices. And market prices of these commodities are several times higher.

Redundant Labour

The introduction of the household contract system has resulted in numerous redundancies. At the estimates of Chinese economists, 100 million of the Chinese countryside's 300 million able-bodied population are out of work.

Natural population growth and increased labour efficiency make this problem specially acute. Chinese experts believe the solution lies in speeding up the process of urbanization. By this they mean not moving redundant rural labour to the towns, but channelling this enormous mass of people into non-agricultural production in the countryside proper, where industrial plants are being set up and workers' settlements built.

Providing jobs for the unemployed through the development of rural industry entails solving the problem of raising the peasants' cultural and general educational standards. The latest population census has revealed that 30 per cent of the Chinese countryside's young and middle-aged population are either totally illiterate or semi-literate. (Only 0.2 per cent of the Sichuan Province's 100-million-odd population are experts in agriculture, livestock breeding or the fishery.) Over the last few years many children have been leaving school to help their parents till the fields or household plots assigned to them under contracts.

A continuous property polarization of the peasants has been in progress in the Chinese countryside over the eight years since the agricultural reform began. The problem of "the enrichment of sections of the peasantry" is being discussed in the press. Many sociologists are of the opinion that this is an acceptable phenomenon. The practice of some peasants using hired labour raises doubts, although with unemployment as high as it is, this is also regarded as a positive aspect of the reform, providing additional jobs and promoting commodity production. Field hands and hired labourers are employed not only by non-Party peasants, but by CPC members as well. Instructions issued in this connection say that while

Building a country road.
From National Geographic (U.S.A.)

January: Record Lows

An unusually severe winter, marked by frequent snowfalls and bitter frost, has set in in many European countries. In January, the air temperature dropped 12-20° C below the usual. Even the experts at the U.S.S.R. Hydrometeorological Centre describe it as "extraordinary" —probably for want of a more accurate scientific term. Over the past 108 years, the first third of January was colder than it is now on only one occasion— in 1950. And it is not only in the capital that January has set low-temperature records this year. In the Ukraine, where winters are usually milder than in Central Russia, the mercury column has hit the —35°C mark.

The Arctic itself, with its icy winds and snow blizzards, has thrust itself upon us and, weather experts say, is not in a hurry to leave.

Drevsjo, Norway, has become the European pole of cold (—49.7°C). In Helsinki, the air temperature was —34.3°C, the lowest in the last 106 years. In some parts of Finland it was

putting the rural Party organizations in order CPC members are not to be disciplined for employing hired hands.

Urbanization

Since the adoption of the new Constitution the administrative management system has been totally restructured in the countryside. Before the reform, there were 54,000 people's communes and 2,800 settlements there. Heads of communes and settlements were in full state, party and economic control. After the reform, 91,590 district, national district and settlement administrative bodies were set up in the countryside; 3,144 national districts were restored or re-established, and the number of settlements was increased to 9,140. Altering the structure of local administrative bodies in the countryside is part of the reform of the country's administrative political structure.

There are many innovations in the Chinese countryside, most of them connected with the production sphere. Technical service centres catering to peasant households have been set up in 700 of over 2,000 regions. The function of these self-supporting centres is not restricted to rendering peasants technical services; they also publicize and promote high-yielding varieties of farm crops and offer expert consultations on all matters connected with agricultural production. In the more developed regions there are machine and tractor stations which plough fields and harvest crops under contract.

In the opinion of Chinese experts, the development of commodity production will help make agriculture more efficient and, moreover, build up the funds necessary for the development of the rural industry indispensable to solving the problem of employment in the countryside.

"The problems of specialization in agriculture, of promoting planned commodity production, narrowing the gap between industry and agriculture, between town and countryside," the newspaper Jingji Ribao points out, "can be solved only by setting up various rural industrial plants at the peasants' own expense. The state is in virtually no position to allocate funds for building such plants as could provide jobs for peasants."

From 1979 to 1983 the output of rural industrial plants came to a total of 56.9 billion yuans. Having met their production costs, these plants were able to allocate 9.4 billion yuans for the purchase of machines, for carrying out agrotechnical work and as grants to peasants engaged in crop farming and livestock breeding.

Official statistics bear witness to high rates of urbanization in the Chinese countryside. In 1986 the rural industry's gross output surpassed that of farm products in terms of value. Rural factories employ 76 million people, who also work in agriculture. This is about 20 per cent of the Chinese countryside's total workforce.

Most products of rural factories are marketed in the countryside, and a substantial proportion of profits goes into the development of agriculture.

Life in the Chinese countryside is not standing still. Quests for the most effective ways of running agricultural production continue.

The first phase of the agricultural reform—the distribution of the land among peasant households—went rather smoothly. In that phase the reform effectively amounted to the revival of the petty natural economy familiar to the Chinese peasant. As a result, the local cadres and the peasants adapted themselves to the "innovations" fairly quickly.

The second phase of the reform is conceived as the introduction of various forms of cooperative farming. The paper Nongmin Ribao reports, for instance, that over 76 per cent of peasants polled in Hubei Province supported cooperative farming, especially in the sphere of finance, farming mechanization and capital construction. The same paper quotes the opponents of cooperative farming as saying that it may revive pay-levelling. It is also opposed by "go-getting peasant families," who are making substantial profits under present circumstances.

Peking

even colder: —38°C. Thirty-degree frosts and squalls have brought motor traffic in Sweden to a standstill. Heavy snowfalls have made the situation even worse by cutting off a number of population centres from the outside world. Current overloads have caused power failures in some parts of the country. Army units have been called in to deliver supplies and medicines to the stranded communities. In France, it's a little warmer: just —20°C, but to the unweathered French this moderate cold feels like Siberian frost. In Austria, a snow blanket, over one metre thick in some parts, has caused traffic disruptions. Snow hurricanes swept roofs from houses and uprooted trees in many parts of Spain, and a serious damage was done to agriculture. Six airports in northern Italy were closed due to strong gales and heavy snowfalls which also affected agricultural areas.

Ice-crusted roads and fogs have created major traffic problems in Britain. A pileup near Coventry caused over 100 wrecked vehicles, injuring 19 motorists. Another, still more dangerous accident occurred on a superhighway near Salisbury where two army trucks collided head-on. There are reasons to believe the trucks carried nuclear ammunition.

The cold and snowfalls are fatally dangerous to the homeless of whom there are, at a conservative estimate, over 30,000 in France and Britain. Western Europe has left tens of thousands of people no hope of keeping a warm roof over their heads. The fact that the year 1987 has been made the U.N. Year of providing housing for the homeless testifies to the acuteness of the problem. Deprived of the inalienable human right to housing, these people have become the first victims of the severe cold. It will be recalled that 600 persons froze to death in their own homes in Britain last winter, which wasn't as cold as this one.

Weather contrasts: The cold in Europe, a flood in South America.

Photos by AP and A. Knyazev

Across the Tasman Sea

A country that has made the world take notice of it

VICTOR LINNIK

From Moscow it seems that New Zealand is just a short way from Australia. In reality, however, one has to cross the Tasman Sea (just over three hours by plane), at the same time moving from the Eastern to the Western Hemisphere, for the two neighbouring countries, separated by a sea named after the Dutchman who discovered New Zealand, are situated in different hemispheres. It was here that we first heard the unfamiliar expression "trans-Tasman flight."

"I Feel I am a New Zealander"

A heavy curtain of rain, driven by strong gusts of wind, welcomed us to Wellington, a town of two- and three-storey neat white houses clinging to the grassy slopes of a volcano and standing close to one another because land is rather expensive. The streets are deserted, especially on Saturdays and Sundays when New Zealanders, who love jogging, angling, sailing and other outdoor activities, leave the city almost en masse. Just as in Australia, horse racing is very popular here. The current local star, named Bonecrusher, has so far been winning all the principal races one after another and causing local experts to make comparisons, flattering to New Zealanders, with the legendary Australian Phar-Lap, a horse whose popularity in this part of the world is greater than that of any film star, athlete and rock idol together.

Most of the country occupies two islands divided by the Cook Strait. Cook, incidentally, was the first voyager to leave detailed descriptions of the islands. The descendants of immigrants from the United Kingdom form the majority of New Zealand's population of three million. There are some 300,000 Maori, the indigenous New Zealanders, and 60,000 people of Dutch descent.

Until recently, New Zealand obediently followed the British crown, and then the United States, in matters of foreign policy. New Zealanders do not miss an opportunity to remind foreigners of a generally little known fact: in per capita terms, their country's contribution to the fight against nazi Germany was the greatest of all the former British dominions.

Like Australia, New Zealand is formally a constitutional monarchy and the British Queen is represented by a Governor-General. But it was the United States that aspired to the role of the country's mentor, especially after the ANZUS pact was set up in 1951. As a result, New Zealanders found themselves drawn into the American wars in Korea and Vietnam. New Zealand had to pay with real human lives for the United States' "nuclear guarantee" against the mythical "Soviet threat." This could not but tell on its relations with both the metropolitan country and the United States. Awareness of the need for an independent foreign policy began to grow. For New Zealand this was a new stage in the development of national consciousness. A large part in this process is played by a reassessment of New Zealand's history and by the common features of the policies, economies and cultures of the countries in the region. I was told by Ian Prior, national secretary of the New Zealand branch of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War: "All my ancestors, including my parents, would speak of a trip to England as a journey home. But I feel I am a New Zealander for whom attachment to the Pacific region is paramount."

Incidentally, the same Dr Prior began his speech at the Soviet-New Zealand symposium in Maori. Up to now, for liberal white intellectuals to speak Maori has been a tribute to fashion, a sort of cultural fad, reminiscent of the Russian intellectuals of the last century and their movement "to mix with the people." However, one of the television channels in Auckland broadcasts news in Maori. It is a gesture, of course, but a significant one.

Familiar Cry

The first Soviet-New Zealand symposium on the subject "Coexistence or Non-existence," sponsored jointly by the New Zealand-U.S.S.R. Society and the Union of Soviet Societies for Friendship and Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, attracted attention in political and public circles. Prominent trade unionists, members of parliament and representatives of the scientific community took part in the discussion. The very fact of the symposium being held was to a certain extent a riposte to the anti-Soviet campaign in the Western press, keynoted by the familiar cry "The Russians are coming!" The fishing agreements concluded or negotiated by the Soviet Union with a number of the region's island states have served as a pretext for this campaign.

The fishing agreements are presented as "the start of Soviet expansion" in the region, in the course of which Moscow will get "bases for its Pacific fleet" and elbow the Americans out. The purpose of this well-orchestrated campaign in the mass media is obvious. It is, firstly, to call the government of New Zealand "to order" for declaring the country a nuclear-free zone and banning calls at its ports by nuclear-powered American ships or those with nuclear weapons on board and, secondly, to compromise the latest Soviet peace initiatives, in particular those set out by Mikhail Gorbachev in his speech in Vladivostok, which contained a wide range of steps to strengthen security and develop the mutually advantageous cooperation of states in the South Pacific.

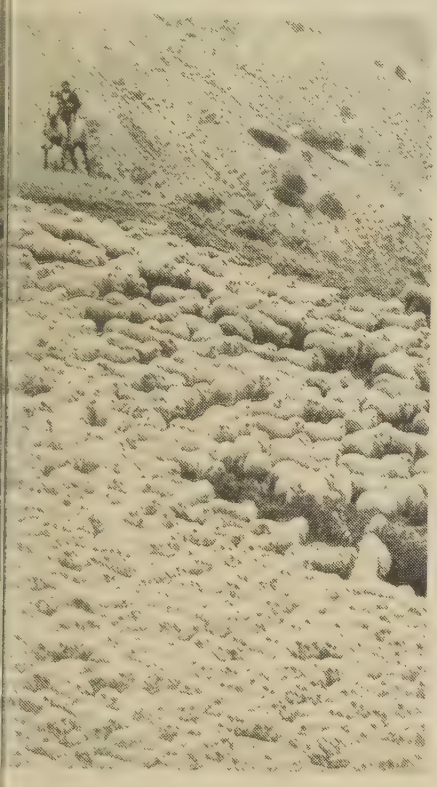
It is also fairly obvious that this campaign aims at complicating the development of Soviet-New Zealand dialogue to the maximum. For this reason, the determination of the true friends of the Soviet Union in the New Zealand-U.S.S.R. Society to organize a joint symposium and give it maximum coverage in the mass media was all the more important as a counterbalance.

Predictably, much was said at the symposium about Reykjavik. It was obvious that the very fact of Reykjavik had worked a profound change in the minds not only of the participants in the symposium but also of the whole New Zealand public. President Reagan's Strategic Defence Initiative was bitterly criticized.

"Excommunication" from ANZUS

To some extent the results of Reykjavik have also increased pessimism in

New Zealand about the prospect of accords between the Soviet Union and the United States as regards nuclear disarmament, strengthening international security and eliminating the danger of nuclear war. I also heard doubts expressed as to the possibility of temptingly simple solutions to the complex problems associated with the arms race, and the historic confrontation of the two systems, a confrontation in which



New Zealanders take special pride in their sheep-breeding.

From National Geographic (U.S.A.)

the military component as a whole, and not only the nuclear one, is so much to the fore. Is it realistic to imagine untying in the course of two days of discussions the knot of contradictions that have accumulated over decades? Is it at all realistic to expect the world to return to its pre-nuclear-weapon stage?

The existence of such feeling proved once again the urgency of the need for new thinking in world affairs and the new approach to international politics which have lately been elaborated with such persistence by the Soviet Union. It is important to show people not only **how** it is possible to achieve security for all, nuclear disarmament for all, but also to convince them that it is **attainable** in principle.

That is why the seminar also discussed the special complexity of the present period in international relations after Reykjavik. With one remarkable step the New Zealand government has unambiguously demonstrated what outcome of Reykjavik would have suited this small country. It was after the Soviet-American summit meeting that the Labour Party ratified the Rarotonga Treaty of 1985 on the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific. Prime Minister David Lange described this document as "the first international arms control agreement concluded since the ill-fated SALT-2 accords in 1979," and for this reason alone an extremely important affirmation of the fact that progress in reducing the nuclear threat is possible.

It goes without saying that such steps by the New Zealand government have evoked an entirely predictable reaction on the part of Washington, which for many decades has viewed the region, to borrow the phrase of U.S. Congressman Stephen Solarz, as a "virtual American lake." The United States has all but excommunicated New Zealand from the ANZUS bloc and is exerting all sorts of pressure on it.

The White House is irked by the independent views and thinking of the New Zealand government on nuclear issues. But it is only to be expected that New Zealand, with its present intellectual potential and its experience of both political and intensive trade and economic contacts with countries in the South Pacific region, should play the role of a generator of ideas on how best to ensure the security of this part of the world.

The desire to speak with its own voice in foreign policy reflects the predominant feeling of the country's public opinion. Similar foreign policy positions are also held by such major New Zealand parties as the Social Credit Party and the New Zealand's Party.

71 Million Sheep

It is precisely the foreign policy aspect of the government's line that makes it popular in the country, as its social and economic policy does not have wide public support. The Labour Party's economic course is described as one of "deregulating" the economy because it aims at eliminating all control over capital, especially monopoly capital. Priority is given to the mechanism of market supply and demand. Foreign banks have been given unlimited access.

As a result, according to official statistics, unemployment in New Zealand remains at a level of 5.5 per cent, while in some areas it is twice as high. Not surprisingly, therefore, the living standards of working people are falling, while prices continue to rise. As always in such situations, the Maori, indigenous to New Zealand, are in the worst plight since they are always the first to be sacked and the last to be taken on.

So, a far from simple economic situation is taking shape in the country, especially in the light of the fact that the United States is erecting protectionist barriers round New Zealand. This is an extremely painful blow to the New Zealand economy as in per capita terms New Zealand holds one of the first places in the world for the volume of its foreign trade.

Farm produce earns New Zealand 62 per cent of its export earnings. Agriculture is highly industrialized, of which New Zealanders are justly proud. There are 71 million sheep in the country. For the sake of comparison it should be said that there are some 150 million sheep in the U.S.S.R., but the human population of the Soviet Union is about 90 times as great as that of New Zealand. The exceptionally favourable climatic conditions make it possible to bring in two harvests a year. Last but not least, New Zealanders know how to work.

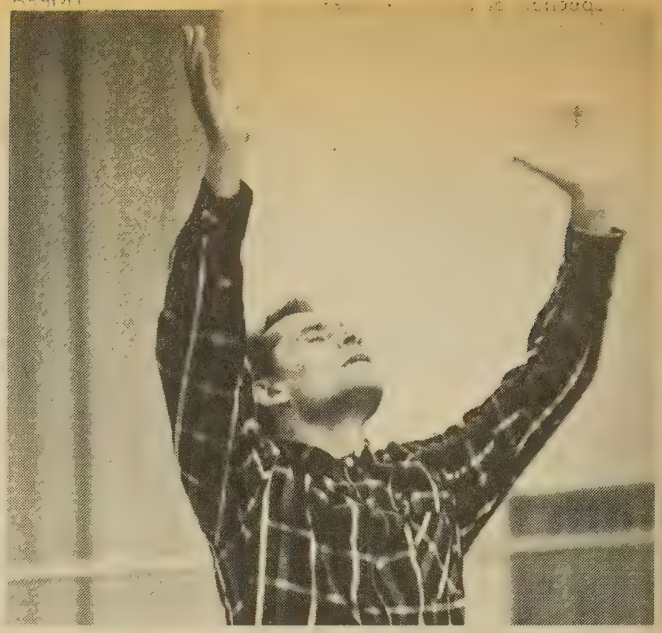
In New Zealand there is considerable interest in the development of trade and economic relations with the U.S.S.R., which is already the country's fifth largest trading partner. This, and the important fact that our countries hold views that have much in common on ways of eliminating the nuclear threat and strengthening international security, both worldwide and in the South Pacific region in particular, create a healthy basis for the stable development of Soviet-New Zealand relations. And here the peoples of our two countries are not the only ones to gain.

Our journey ended in Auckland, once described by Rudyard Kipling as "loneliest, loveliest, exquisite and apart." As our plane lifted rapidly into the clouds, we saw the jagged coast of the North Island, where New Zealanders have their own Southern Alps, with their own Khyber Pass as well as their own River Thames—evidence of the eternal and always understandable desire of immigrants to preserve, if only in names, the memory of the native places left behind by their ancestors.

Wellington—Auckland—Moscow

Drama of the Dance

- **He has no use for weakly characters. His theme is always struggle**
- **Turning to Shostakovich again: "The Bolt"**
- **"The Master and Margarita"—Bulgakov's novel, music by Penderecki, choreography by Grigorovich**



On January 11 the Bolshoi Theatre Company celebrated the 60th birthday of its principal choreographer Prof. Yuri Grigorovich, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. and U.S.S.R. Lenin and State Prizes laureate who has been awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labour for his valuable services to ballet. To mark the occasion a gala concert was held, incorporating scenes from three of Prof. Grigorovich's productions.

He seems unchanging. The same pointed features, close-cropped hair, lanky frame and arms held wide apart as if to embrace the entire auditorium. Such is the appearance he has presented for nearly 30 years to audiences in many countries, wherever the Kirov Ballet of Leningrad and the Bolshoi Ballet of Moscow toured. Dancers come and go, but ballet lives on. One day I was struck by the following interesting sequence. Yuri Grigorovich's teacher at the Leningrad school of choreography was Alexander Shiryaev, which thus assured continuity from the 1940s back to the 19th century; Shiryaev was taught by Christian Johanson, himself a pupil of Auguste Bournonville, whose teacher in turn was the legendary 18th century Auguste Vestris, a pupil of none other than Jean Noverre himself. Imagine, two and a half centuries, but only six names, including that of the Bolshoi's present principal choreographer.

Yuri Grigorovich was still unborn when Fyodor Lopukhov's "Ice Maiden" and Kasyan Goleizovsky's "Joseph the Beautiful," those earliest productions of the new Soviet ballet, were first billed. He was still a shy pupil at ballet school when Leonid Lavrovsky produced his "Romeo and Juliet" which for many years to come would define the aesthetic and practice of ballet. As a young artist he danced in the first-night performance of "Spartacus," staged by Leonid Yakobson in the 1950s. At the close of the 1950s Yuri Grigorovich made his debut as a choreographer with Prokofiev's "Stone Flower," under the supervision of 70-year-old Lopukhov, at the time artistic director of the Leningrad Opera and Ballet.

Leonid Lavrovsky, then the Bolshoi principal choreographer, invited Grigorovich to stage the "Stone Flower" in Moscow. Subsequently Grigorovich, who had by then taken over from Lavrovsky, invited the venerable Kasyan Goleizovsky to stage the ballet "Leila and Medjnun."

Externally this would seem to represent the full and harmonious continuity of the succeeding generations and their artistic experiments at each new phase of the development of choreography. This is truly so, now that time has smoothed over the inevitable conflicts between the different approaches. Still, things are never smooth when a new artist appears on the scene. This had been the case before and was so again when Yuri Grigorovich introduced his own choreographic style.

It was a clash with a Bolshoi practice that had gradually turned its own achievements against itself. Genuine monumentality had yielded to sumptuous pomp and choreography full of meaning to the pantomime of "explanatory" mise-en-scènes, wherein the significance of the dance itself was relegated all but to the last place.

Grigorovich rebelled against this, at first with his "Stone Flower" and then with his "Legend of Love," in which priority was attached to the dance, whose forms were at once intensive and symphonically important, and in which the action itself derived from the dance. Some thought this audacious but today we have become accustomed to what was then astoundingly innovative.

Such is the fate of every innovation, judged as it is initially exclusively by conventional yardsticks. What the ear hears today as the limpid, crystal-clear music of Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" was rejected in the 1930s at its first Bolshoi performance on the grounds of its "incomprehensible and non-melodious nature." Only after the spectacular Leningrad production did that music triumphantly return there in the 1940s.

Yuri Grigorovich was lucky in that he had far more allies than adversaries. The very atmosphere of artistic and social development in the country in the mid-1950s hailed a new era for ballet. Grigorovich was followed by other younger choreographers.

Today Yuri Grigorovich is an acknowledged master who has produced a dozen ballets, each of them a milestone, for none repeated past achievements either thematically or visually. With his productions of all of Tchaikovsky's ballets he demonstrated a profound dedication to the classical traditions of the Russian ballet and a thorough knowledge of all its forms. Markedly different were his dynamic "Spartacus," which staggered audiences with its powerful expressiveness, his "Ivan the Terrible," which centred on the vivid and contradictory figure of the Russian tsar. And "The Golden Age," which fused into a single amalgam the street of the 1920s and the 1930s with its blue-collar theatres and sporting festivities; with the cabaret of bourgeois consumerism, he contrasts the heroic quest for the new ideal.

Grigorovich's theme is always struggle, the conflict of complex polarized forces. Each has its own truth, whatever the form, as beautiful as Spartacus's thirst for liberty, or as horrible as Crassus's suppression of that liberty. He has no use for weakly characters or the in-

trospection of trendy modern ones. He is harsh at times, but the truth can be harsh as well.

He is as outspoken in art as in his judgements of it. "Some people become frightfully modernistic when they fail in classical dance," Grigorovich ironically observes, discussing the relationship between classical and modern ballet. That does not at all imply repudiation of the very principle of contemporary ballet. He is genuinely amazed whenever classical choreography is viewed as a rigidly canonical system. He considers the classical dance to be the expression of ideas in choreographic terms, a language evolved over the centuries somewhat akin to symphonic music. In this connection he cites the examples of Bach, Mahler and Shostakovich who, while each adhering to the same system, had their own inimitably individual approach. Classical ballet is a language that has organically assimilated all the acquisitions made over the ages, one that cannot restrict the imagination, when this assimilation is perfect.

During the American ballet tour fifteen years ago, this subject arose in one of the dressing rooms at the Kremlin Palace of Congresses. Involved in the discussion were George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins and Yuri Grigorovich, a "pas-de-trois in the conversational genre," as one of them facetiously remarked. A "pas-de-trois in conversational genre" yes, but to imagine them jointly composing and executing a dance is difficult, although they all proceed from the language of classical choreography. All the more fascinating, therefore, are the experiments of an original artist, in that he pushes back the frontiers of the familiar. His style is not cramped along his chosen path and nobody's elbows impede his advance.

My encounters with Yuri Grigorovich have enabled me to witness many exciting events, as well as conversations with leading world choreographers. I remember how immediately Grigorovich found a common language with John Cranko, when he came to Moscow with the Stuttgart Ballet led by Marcia Haydée, who swept the audience off their feet in "The Taming of the Shrew." I remember how happy Grigorovich was with his colleague's ability to make the audience chuckle during a ballet, inasmuch as through classical dance he had been able to convey every comical situation.

The language of the dance is international, a point often made by Yuri Grigorovich and his American colleague Robert Joffrey. They say this both as superb choreographers and as leaders of the international ballet community. For many years they have been co-presidents of the Dance Committee of the UNESCO International Theatre Institute. They have been collaborating most successfully, transforming this body by their joint efforts into a real centre of the ballet world, a forum for productive meetings and discussions with the aim of promoting ballet in different countries.

I covered the institute's meetings in Varna and Moscow, and saw for myself the prestige Grigorovich commands among his colleagues. He communicates easily, is courteous, full of good will, and knows how to bring different viewpoints together in such a way that no individual opinion is overlooked when the overall decision is taken. For many years Grigorovich has chaired jury panels at international ballet competitions in Moscow, Osaka, Jackson and Helsinki, and it should be noted that he has never once resorted to his privilege of giving the casting vote in the event of controversy.

I have also seen how he works at the Bolshoi and what demands he makes on all involved in a production taken on tour. In his view Bolshoi performances should proceed without a hitch, irrespective of working conditions and the state of technical equipment and the stage. He reacts sensitively to the slightest mistakes by the electricians or propmen. He does not allow himself a single prerogative and is just as demanding of others. It is his conviction that only discipline and dedication are conducive to creation. Sometimes he will re-do a scene he is unhappy with dozens of times, indeed, not just a scene, but even an entire performance. The attentive balletomane will have noticed the steady improvement in practically all his productions, for each is a living organism which he constantly infuses with fresh blood to prevent it petrifying.

He has brought scores of young dancers to the fore, boldly giving them the most demanding roles and never keeping them on the sidelines. In his view ballet is an art of the young. Having broken off his own dancing career to become a choreographer he himself did not have to experience the incredible wrench the dancer feels when he has to give up what has been his life's work. With him one pinnacle followed another. Now as principal choreographer he has annually to cope with the difficult problem of the change of generations, all the more acute as it affects eminent dancers on the Bolshoi's roll of honour. However, this is a problem that every ballet company in the world has to face.

The Bolshoi Ballet's tours abroad began in Britain in 1956, presenting Galina Ulanova to the world. The 1986 tour was a jubilee one, coming as it did exactly 30 years later. The éclat enjoyed in London, Manchester and Birmingham was stupendous, with Grigorovich's productions of "Spartacus," "The Golden Age" and "Raymonda" taking audiences by storm. Ballet critics in leading British papers showered the producer, the stars, and the entire company with compliments.

Yet it is a fact that the company was a completely new one. Many of the dancers were still unborn at the time of the first British tour. On the other hand, the legendary Galina Ulanova, Raisa Struchkova, who during the 1956 tour had also danced Juliet, and other brilliant dancers of the older generation, came to Britain as their teachers. This blending of experience, tradition and wisdom with the fresh perception of youth is an earnest of the Bolshoi Ballet's success.

Never has the Bolshoi company been so varied, forceful and, above all, full of promise as today. This is another result of the artistic policy Yuri Grigorovich has pursued over the 20-odd years he has been discharging the far from easy function of artistic director.

He has now produced a round dozen "full-length" ballets, each a highlight not only for the audience, but also for the cast. Yet you cannot please everyone all of the time, and if the dancers are entitled to be dissatisfied, how much more so the director? Grigorovich himself maintains that a director can be considered a success only when he has the majority on his side. The current state of affairs shows once again how right he is.

The world of the artist is a complex one. Only the artist knows for certain how he reflects surrounding reality in his work.

"There is no formula," he told me once when I asked him how he choreographed the dances. Each time is different.

He is currently engaged in staging two new ballets. One is to be premiered this year. It is another Shostakovich ballet, "The Bolt," for which a new libretto has been written. For the second, only the scenario exists so far. The music from the eminent Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki has been commissioned. The ballet is to be based on Mikhail Bulgakov's novel "The Master and Margarita." Grigorovich first conceived the idea many years ago, but for various reasons was not able to go ahead with it. He is also thinking of staging a revised production of Prokofiev's "Cinderella."

Work is his god and his judge. For this reason he never has time to rest on his laurels.

Alexander AVDEYENKO

TAKING UP A POINT

There have been many complaints about services: laundering, garment making, the repair of TV sets and other appliances, furniture, etc. When are we to see a dramatic improvement in this area! In which services can speedy improvement be expected!

Y. SAMOILOV
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

IVAN DUDENKOV,
Minister for Community Services of the Russian Federation, replies:

It is true that although the general level of services available to the population has improved many times over in, say, the past twenty years, it still leaves much to be desired. What is the root of the evil? For many years the importance of the social infrastructure has been grossly underestimated. I would say that we have been too busy arguing the indisputable advantages of the socialist system over the capitalist one and too little concerned with creating the material basis for realizing these advantages. Old habits die hard, and they are still making themselves felt in the sphere of services.

We are the last industry to be allocated material resources and we get raw materials of poorer quality than other industries. Only 20-50 per cent of the service industry's demand for new equipment is met, and it is never met fully. In many cases we get obsolete equipment from other industries, notably from light industry. We have yet to create specialized offices to design hair-dressing tools, fans, washing machines for men's shirts and factories to manufacture all this equipment.

We took heart from the recent speech by Mikhail Gorbachev in which he called on the high-technology defence and engineering industries to help out in retooling the light and services industries.

A new nationwide programme to boost consumer goods and service industries has recently been launched. It differs mainly from previous such measures in that it will be carried out not only by government departments. The local bodies of power—the Soviets—which have been given broad powers to use all available material, financial and labour resources will take part in its implementation. Now practically all the industries in the country, regardless of the government department to which they belong, will be involved in rendering services to the population. This is a timely and important decision.

We now have an opportunity to enlist the services of new, highly qualified people. Great opportunities are opening up and some of the restrictions on doing part-time work in addition to the main one have been lifted. Old-age pensioners, housewives and students represent a considerable pool of untapped labour.

In August 1986 the Political Bureau of the CPSU adopted a decision on promoting cooperatives in the service sphere. These will make up for the labour shortage by taking over such services as the building of country houses and repair of apartments, mediation services, the care of children and the sick, and so on. Cooperatives, comprising between 5 and 50 people, can rent premises and obtain credits, equipment, tools and resources from the state on a contractual basis. Two or three pilot cooperatives of this kind are being created in every region of the Russian Federation. The experience of our friends in Hungary, the G.D.R. and Bulgaria has shown that this form of labour organization is good both for the clients and the members of the cooperatives.

Now for your question as to priorities in the field of services. We shall do everything to develop customer-ordered repairs and redecoration of apartments. Service establishments in the union republics will meet to a considerable extent the demand for designing and building, on a turn-key basis, wooden and brick country houses. Today there are some 5 million families who have land allotments in the countryside, and their number is expected to grow by a million a year. The volume of furniture repair services offered will be doubled, to which end more than a thousand repair facilities will be opened throughout the country. We are now setting up teams to assemble store-bought furniture at clients' homes. Major shops selling such furniture will start taking orders to assemble it this year. Pilot fashion tailoring services and youth fashion houses are being set up in major cities. The network of do-it-yourself services will be extended.

Finally, I'd like to say that two things are crucial for achieving a breakthrough in our field. Our industry must be firmly established on an equal footing with other industries and all its employees must give of their best.

■

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FLAMENCO

"You cannot watch this dance with detachment, it defies all the laws of logic; one can only abandon oneself to the storm of sound and the whirl of movement." Thus Lion Feuchtwanger about flamenco music, dance and song.

This inimitable genre of Spanish folk art originated in Andalusia with the gypsies that settled in that part of Spain. The literal meaning of "cante flamenco" is "song of the Andalusian gypsies," but the exact origin of the flamenco is unknown; too many influences—Phoenician, Greek, Byzantine, Arab—have left their mark on it. Perhaps the secret of its unique charm lies in the colourful mixture of national cultures.

The art of the flamenco cannot be learned, it is acquired from childhood, by osmosis, so to say, like speech. How can that syncopate rhythm, that gamut of feeling and emotion be described? Federico Garcia Lorca wrote that this is impossible until the duende, the demon of art, comes and brings inspiration and oblivion to all but the music.

Soviet audiences recently had a chance to appreciate the power of that demon when the Feria de Mayo flamenco company gave performances during the Madrid Days programme in Moscow. There were only 4 dancers: Rocio Loreto, Carmen Ledesma, Carmen Barges and Pepa Bermudez, one guitarist, Enrique Paredes, and a contador (singer), Rafael Fernandez. But how enchanting the magic of their flamenco!

Photos by A. Ratnikov

Hibakusha. Nagasaki.

Ittetsu Morishita (Japan)

INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

MAN AND MANKIND

ИНДЕКС 70622 НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ